

NELSON and WELLINGTON

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 00355999 4





Presented to
The Library
of the
University of Toronto
by
THE ESTATE OF THE LATE
EFFIE M.K. GLASS





CHARGE OF THE FRENCH CUIRASSIERS AT WATERLOO.

THE STORY
OF
NELSON AND WELLINGTON

Illustrated

LONDON : 38 Soho Square, W.
W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED
EDINBURGH : 339 High Street

POPULAR BIOGRAPHIES.

Price One Shilling each. Illustrated.

"Present concisely and in a graphic manner the life-story of the celebrities mentioned. Much praise is due to the publishers for this very handy and useful series."—*Bookseller.*

QUEEN VICTORIA: The Story of her Life and Reign.

WALLACE AND BRUCE: Heroes of Scotland. By Mary Cochrane, L.L.A.

TENNYSON: The Story of his Life. By Evan J. Cuthbertson.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By Evan J. Cuthbertson.

WILLIAM I., GERMAN EMPEROR. By Mary Cochrane, L.L.A.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON. By E. C. Kenyon.

THE STORY OF LIVINGSTONE AND STANLEY.

THOMAS CARLYLE: The Story of his Life and Writings.

GENERAL GORDON AND LORD DUNDONALD.

THOMAS TELFORD AND JAMES BRINDLEY. Two famous Engineers.

LORD SHAFTESBURY AND GEORGE PEABODY.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE: The Story of his Life and Career.

SIR WALTER SCOTT. By Robert Chambers, LL.D.

COLUMBUS AND COOK: The Story of their Lives.

HOWARD AND OBERLIN. The Great Philanthropists.

NELSON AND WELLINGTON. Two of Britain's Heroes.

WATT AND STEPHENSON. The Story of the Steam-Engine.

PERSEVERANCE AND SUCCESS. The Life of William Hutton.

STORY OF A LONG AND BUSY LIFE. By W. Chambers, LL.D.

W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED, LONDON AND EDINBURGH.



809449

DA

87

.1

N4S7



ADMIRAL NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.



ORATIO NELSON was born on the 29th of September 1758, in the parsonage-house of Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk, of which his father, the Rev. Edmund Nelson, was rector. Horatio was his fifth son, and named after his god-father, the first Lord Walpole, to whom Mrs Nelson was related. The early days of the

young Horatio gave promise of the future man. He became distinguished among his youthful companions for bold and adventurous achievements. Though weak in constitution, and subject to attacks of ague, which made him irritable in temper, he possessed the best dispositions, and



Birthplace of Nelson.

even when young, had a high sense of conscientiousness, and shrunk from everything like deception or meanness.

It is related of him that, when about five years of age, being on a visit to his grandmother, he absented himself without permission: not making his appearance at the dinner hour, the old lady became much alarmed, especially

as he had formed acquaintance with a gang of gipsies who were loitering in the neighbourhood, and she was apprehensive they might have decoyed him away. Diligent search in various directions was promptly instituted, and after the lapse of several hours, he was found alone by the side of a rather rapid and deep brook, which he was unable to cross. His conduct on this occasion was peculiar to him through life—he evinced no symptoms of alarm, although his companion (a cow-boy little older than himself) had left him; and when his grandmother closed a reproof with: ‘I wonder, child, that fear did not drive you home!’ he promptly answered: ‘Fear! Grandmamma, I never saw fear. What is it?’

The first seminary of any importance which he attended was the High School at Norwich; and while studying here, he was recalled home on the death of his mother, who expired December 24, 1767, Horatio being then about nine years and three months old. How little often determines one’s career in life! The funeral of Mrs Nelson brought her brother, Captain Suckling, of the Royal Navy, on a visit to the rectory; and on this occasion the imagination of young Horatio was fired by the stories and anecdotes of sea-life which his uncle related in the company of his friends, and he determined, if possible, to be a sailor. His studies at Norwich, and afterwards at North Walsham, failed in obliterating this juvenile fancy from his mind; and his father, desirous of permitting him to follow the bent of his inclinations, easily induced Captain Suckling to take him under his charge. Passing over the painful parting with brothers and playmates, we follow the young aspirant in his entrance into active life.

The ship of Captain Suckling was lying in the Medway,

and to place him in the way of reaching it, Mr Nelson accompanied his son to the metropolis; but from thence he was sent down, unattended and unbefriended, to Chatham.

The entrance of Nelson upon the profession of which he was destined to be the highest ornament, took place under extraordinary circumstances. His uncle, it appears, knew not on what day he was to be expected. Arriving therefore at Chatham, shivering with cold, and not knowing where to go or what to do, Horatio wandered about the streets for some hours, undergoing the full weight of that desolation of heart which, even in the most favourable circumstances, befalls young persons for the first time sent from a home of familiar faces into the midst of strangers. At length a kind-hearted officer, observing his melancholy appearance, took him to his house and administered to his necessities; after which he put him into a boat to be conveyed to the *Raisable*. Here again he met with disappointment—his uncle was not on board—no one had been apprised of his coming; and he walked the deck the whole of the remainder of the day without any one noticing him, or making him an offer of food; and it was not till the succeeding day that humanity prompted the gunner to inquire who he was, and, as Nelson himself afterwards expressed it, ‘to take compassion on him.’

The *Raisable* had been put into commission in consequence of a dispute with Spain, which seemed likely to lead to war. This expectation proving happily fallacious, the vessel was quickly discharged, so as to leave to Captain Suckling no alternative from sending his nephew on board a merchant West Indiaman, under charge of a master who had been his own mate. In this situation young Nelson

applied himself diligently to his duties, and acquired a considerable knowledge of his profession ; but amongst the crew he imbibed a dislike to the Royal Navy, as a service not calculated to afford the best practical knowledge of seamanship and navigation.

On his return home, he found his uncle in command of the *Triumph*, 74, lying as guardship at Chatham, and he was invited to join that ship. Much as he esteemed his uncle, he was averse to comply ; but Captain Suckling, desirous of removing the false impressions that had been made, urged upon him the many advantages to be derived in the service, and the youth reluctantly consented. A period of peace offers but a confined sphere of operation for a young naval officer ; there is, in fact, little opportunity of acquiring knowledge, especially on board a guardship, and therefore his uncle, by way of encouragement, gave Horatio charge of the launch, that had been decked and rigged as a cutter-tender to the ship of the commanding-officer of the station. This was a situation which could not fail to be agreeable to our youth, as it gratified that ambition of distinction which was ever his ruling passion. His exultation, however, noways allayed the thirst for information which was also strong in him. His little vessel had frequently to navigate the Medway down to the Great Nore, and from thence up the Thames to the receiving-ship for volunteers and impressed men lying off the Tower of London ; or down the intricate channels, and round the North Foreland to the Downs. It was a humble service ; but even humble services can be well or ill performed ; and in no situation in life may a young man of apt faculties fail to acquire skill that will fit him for higher callings. The boy Nelson—for such he really was—became a clever pilot for those parts, and gained a con-

fidence in his own knowledge that increased as he grew older.

In April 1773, on the application of the Royal Society, Lord Sandwich ordered two stout bomb-ketches, the *Race-horse* and the *Carcase*, to be fitted out for the purpose of getting as far north as possible, in order to explore the much talked of North-west Passage. The former vessel was commanded by the Honourable Captain Phipps (afterwards Lord Mulgrave), the latter by Captain Lutwidge, both excellent seamen and scientific men. Every attention was paid to the equipment of the expedition, both for the attainment of the object and for the comfort of the people. Nelson's mind, already excited by the responsibility of command, and the acquisition of nautical knowledge, especially as a pilot, no sooner heard of the intended voyage of discovery than he became extremely solicitous to join in it. But orders had been issued that no boys were to be admitted on board of either vessel, and therefore there was no prospect of his being able to go. Still, he did not fail, at every convenient opportunity, to press the matter upon Captain Suckling, who, won by his nephew's importunity, applied to Captain Lutwidge, with whom he was upon terms of friendship, to take him in the *Carcase*. The order of the Admiralty was for sometime a considerable obstacle; till, struck by the unsubdued spirit of the bold and anxious lad, the commander of the *Carcase* consented to receive him, and he was rated cockswain on the ketch's books.

The vessels sailed on the 2d June 1773, and on the 28th of the same month made the land of Spitzbergen, and ran along the coast, which was pretty clear of ice, and the weather moderate; but on the 5th July they found a barrier that opposed their further progress. The ice

extended from north-west to east, without displaying any opening, the vessels having run along it from east to west more than ten degrees. Captain Phipps then changed his course to the eastward with no better success. On the 31st July they were encompassed by ice, and by observation found themselves to be in latitude $80^{\circ} 37'$ N.; the ships, separated by the massive blocks, being only two lengths from each other, and without room to swing.

On the 3d August, finding that the ice did not give way, but, on the contrary, pressed so heavily that some of the blocks were forced above the others as high as the mainyard, the officers gave orders to cut a passage through; but the progress made by the men was so small, and the dangers to which they would be exposed by wintering there so great, that Captain Phipps announced his intention of launching the boats (which had been prepared for such an exigency) over the ice, and abandoning the vessels altogether. After this undertaking had been commenced, an opening was observed; all sail was set on the two vessels, to force them along; and on the 9th, the ice becoming more loose, they moved slowly through small openings, and got past the boats, which were taken on board again. On the following day, after encountering much peril, a brisk wind from the north-north-east carried them clear, and they returned to the harbour of Smeerenburg, on the coast of Spitzbergen, to repair damages.

Young Nelson acquired much praise for his assiduity and intrepidity during the period of peril. He had charge of one of the exploring boats, and acquitted himself so well, that he gained the approbation of both Captain Phipps and his own commander. One night, whilst blocked up in the ice, a bear was observed prowling about

the *Carcase*; and Nelson, who had the watch on deck, unperceived, armed himself with a musket, and, accompanied by a shipmate, went in pursuit of the animal. A heavy fog came on, and Nelson's absence being detected, a search was promptly instituted, but without effect, and he was given up for lost. As daylight advanced, however, he was discovered at a considerable distance off, and his companion about midway between him and the vessel. By the aid of the glass, Nelson was seen with his musket clubbed near to an immense white bear that was separated from him by a chasm in the ice. A gun was fired to recall him, but he hesitated to obey: at last, however, he returned, and then he related that, having presented his musket at the bear, it had missed fire; but anxious to slay the creature, he had followed, under a hope of getting a good blow at it with the butt of his weapon. The firing of the gun from the ship frightened the beast away, and probably saved the lad's life. His captain severely reprimanded him for quitting the vessel without leave, and demanded the cause of his placing himself in so much peril. 'Sir,' answered Nelson, 'I wanted to kill the bear, that I might get the skin for my father.'

After recruiting the strength of the crews, and repairing the injuries sustained from the icebergs, Captain Phipps sailed from Smeerenburg to renew his task; but finding everywhere that the barrier was impenetrable (many of the bergs being not less than three hundred feet in height), and the season getting far advanced, he bore up on the 22d August for England, where soon afterwards the vessels were paid off.



Nelson and the Bear.

CHAPTER II.

JOINS THE ROYAL NAVY.

THE exploring vessels were paid off a few days after Nelson had entered upon his fourteenth year, and he passed a short interval at the parsonage-house in Burnham Thorpe, where he was looked upon as a hero. He then rejoined his uncle at Chatham; but understanding that the *Seahorse*, a frigate of 20 guns, was fitting for the East Indies, under the command of the celebrated Captain Farmer, whose bravery was well known, he applied to be removed into her; and through the interest of his uncle, and the recommendation of Captains Phipps and Lutwidge, he succeeded. He was not at first rated as a midshipman, though he was privileged to appear on the quarter-deck, and messed with the 'young gentlemen.' Captain Farmer's name was so famous, that parents who had destined their sons for the sea were glad to get them under so gallant a chief, and consequently the vacancies were filled; but to give him the pay of an able seaman, he was rated as a foretop-man, and in reefing and furling sails, the foretop was the station he occupied, to assist in the operation and to see it well performed. As soon as a vacancy occurred on the books, it was filled up with his name.

He joined the *Seahorse* in October 1773, very little more than a fortnight after being paid off from the *Carcase*; and now he was about to traverse the Indian Ocean. The

manners of Nelson did not at first please his new mess-mates ; his indefatigable attention to his duties did not altogether accord with their aristocratic feelings ; and when they saw him dipping his hands into a tar-bucket, and assisting the men in working amongst the rigging, they looked upon it as degrading to an officer : but his amiable disposition soon conquered. In the difficulties of this crisis, he was much supported by a kindred spirit which he found in a midshipman named Thomas Trowbridge, afterwards associated with him in several of his most brilliant adventures, and who, like himself, had been connected with the merchant service. Two such natures could not be near each other without forming a strong friendship : that of Nelson and Trowbridge was to last for life. They were fortunate in having for the master of their vessel a gentleman named Surridge, who, sympathising in their extreme desire to advance in professional skill, took them under his especial care and tuition, and afforded them admirable nautical instruction, particularly after reaching the East Indies, when with his pupils he engaged himself in making accurate surveys in the Bay of Bengal.

At first the climate agreed with Nelson's health ; he grew stout in person and florid in complexion ; but his anxious zeal and untiring application preyed upon a constitution still weak. He was attacked by fever, which reduced him to a skeleton, and for some time he lost the entire use of his limbs. The commander-in-chief, Sir Edward Hughes, would willingly have retained him upon the station ; but regard for his existence pleaded for his being sent home, though apprehensions were entertained that he could never reach England. His friend Trowbridge, who attended to his wants, and nursed him with the

utmost care, was greatly distressed at his situation. His disease baffled the power of medicine, and he appeared to be sinking fast, when he was put on board the *Dolphin*, of 20 guns, commanded by Captain James Pigot—his old commander, Captain Farmer, giving him strong testimonials as to conduct and character. The parting between Nelson and Trowbridge was very affecting—the former expecting soon to be in eternity, the latter left to toil in the duties of the naval service.

For a long time during the passage to England, Nelson's life hung tremblingly in the balance; and had he been in less humane hands, his hammock would have been his shroud, and the ocean his grave; but from Captain Pigot he received the most careful attention and kindness; and to this worthy officer, under the blessing of Providence, may be attributed the rescuing of the future hero from death. On his arrival at home, about the middle of September 1776, his health was found to be improved, but he was still weak and emaciated, and labouring under that heavy depression of spirit which may truly be called sickness of heart. He had left his messmates happy in pursuing the line of active duty, and full of exulting hopes; whilst he, enervated and almost helpless, had a dark cloud hanging over him, presaging a career that seemed dreary and unprofitable. Some years afterwards, when speaking upon this subject, he said: 'I felt impressed with a feeling that I should never rise in my profession. My mind was staggered with a view of the difficulties that opposed my progress, and the little interest I possessed to advance me in the service. There appeared to be no means by which I could attain the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled

in my breast, and presented my sovereign and my country as my patrons, and I exclaimed: "Well, then, I will yet live to be a hero, and confiding in Providence, I will fearlessly meet and brave every danger."

This was a spirit of mingled enthusiasm and natural piety, which at all future periods animated Nelson, and supported him under every trial. Previous to his return from India, Captain Suckling had been made comptroller of the navy, an office that conferred considerable influence. When the *Dolphin* was paid off on the 24th September, Nelson was sent on board the *Worcester*, of 64 guns, commanded by Captain Mark Robinson, whose name has been recorded amongst the bravest in England's naval history. He served a short time as master's mate; but whilst lying at Spithead under sailing orders to convoy a fleet of transports and merchantmen to Gibraltar, one of the lieutenants committed suicide during a fit of insanity, and Nelson, at the request of his captain, was appointed acting-lieutenant in his stead by the port-admiral at Portsmouth, Sir James Douglas. He had not then entered upon his nineteenth year, nor had he passed his examination; but so excellent were his recommendations, that the utmost confidence was reposed in him; and his captain was often heard to say, that 'in the night-watches he felt equally as easy when Nelson had charge of the deck as when the oldest officer in the ship was there.' Nelson's grateful esteem was continued to Captain Robinson throughout his life.

The *Worcester* was employed with convoys till April 1777, on the 10th of which month Nelson passed his examination most triumphantly. On the following day he received his commission as second-lieutenant of the *Lowestoft*, a frigate of 32 guns, under Captain William



Nelson volunteering to board the Prize.

Locker, in which he sailed for Jamaica. At this time Britain was engaged in the disastrous war with her colonies. The *Lowestoft*, in one of her cruises after French and American privateers, captured an American letter of marque. It was blowing a strong gale at the time, and a heavy sea running, but it was deemed necessary to board; and the boat being hoisted out, the first-lieutenant was ordered away for the purpose. Whether he disliked the job or not, he was rather long below in seeking for his sidearms. Captain Locker, during the interval, came on deck, and seeing that the boat was likely to be swamped alongside, exclaimed: 'What! have I no officer in the ship to board the prize?' The master immediately volunteered; but Nelson, whom a sense of delicacy to the first-lieutenant had kept from offering himself, instantly ran to the gangway, and stopping the master, said: 'Avast there! it is my turn now; and if I come back, it will be yours.' He jumped into the boat, and succeeded in getting upon the American's deck. He found her completely water-logged, from the heavy press of canvas she had been carrying, so that the boat was washed in board and out again with the sea.

Similar acts endeared him to Captain Locker; and the death of his uncle about this time rendered his commander's friendship the more valuable. Earnestly desirous of active employment, he obtained the command of a small schooner, tender to the frigate, and in her he cruised amongst the islands, and gained a correct knowledge of West India pilotage, particularly of the keys to the northward of Hispaniola—a cluster of small rocks and islands, which render the navigation extremely difficult. By Captain Locker's warm eulogiums and recommendations, Sir Peter Parker removed him into the *Bristol*, his flagship; but

this change was only for a short time; for, on the 8th of December 1778, Nelson, then about twenty years and two months old, was appointed commander of the *Badger* sloop, Collingwood taking his place as first-lieutenant of the *Bristol*. He was ordered to protect the Mosquito shore and the Bay of Honduras from the depredations of American privateers, which service he effectually performed, gaining so much grateful respect from the settlers, that they unanimously voted him their thanks. On his return to Montego Bay, Jamaica, the *Glasgow* frigate came in, and, in about two hours after her arrival, was discovered to be in flames, from the igniting of a cask of rum. Nelson repaired on board without a moment's delay, and, by his presence of mind and promptitude, was mainly instrumental in preventing the loss of life which otherwise must certainly have ensued. He continued in the *Badger* till the 11th June 1779, when (though not twenty-one) he was posted into the *Hinchinbrook*, of 28 guns, a captured French merchantman that had been bought into the service, and Collingwood again succeeded him in the *Badger*.

Nelson was next concerned in a naval expedition against the Spanish territories in Honduras; but this proved a disastrous affair. The troops, under the charge of a major in the army, were disembarked on this low part of the South American continent, March 24, 1780. When too late, it was found that no one knew the country, and the difficulties which presented themselves were of so formidable a character that most hearts failed. Nelson, who had charge of the nautical part of the enterprise, was not the man to be appalled by such difficulties. He mustered a party of seamen, and, with his own boats and the canoes of the Indians, ascended the river San Juan, then unusually low.

Every day the hazards and labour increased under the intense heat of a scorching sun, and both banks of the river being covered with lofty trees, the circulation of air was utterly impeded, and at night the unwholesome and heavy dews saturated the clothes of the people. Sickness broke out; but still they persevered till the 9th of April, when a battery upon the island of St Bartolomeo opened its fire upon them, and Nelson, accompanied by Captain Despard of the army, leaped upon the muddy beach at the head of a few seamen, stormed the fortification, and took it.

Two days afterwards they appeared before the fortress of St Juan. Nelson advised that it should be carried at once by assault, and volunteered, as he called it, 'to head the boarders;' but the military chief deemed it necessary to carry on a protracted siege, with all its details and formalities, and thus much time was thrown away. The fatigue and unhealthy climate rapidly thinned the ranks; the rains set in, and disease to an alarming extent prevailed when the garrison surrendered on the 24th. Had Nelson's counsel been followed, the greater portion of these disasters might have been spared. They found the castle and town destitute of everything that was required by the sick, and devoid of all comfort and maintenance for those who still remained on duty. At last the interment of the dead became impracticable to the living, and the putrid bodies were launched into the stream, or left for the birds to prey upon. In these circumstances the conquest was abandoned, and out of 1800 men, not more than 380 returned; whilst, of the whole crew of the *Hinchinbrook*, consisting of 200 men, only ten were saved. The transports' people all died; and several of the vessels being destitute of hands, were left to sink at their anchors.

It may easily be supposed what were the feelings of Nelson under the pressure of such calamities. He had been injured by drinking from a brook into which boughs of the manchineel-tree had been thrown; and though his undaunted spirit remained unsubdued, yet sickness almost conquered his frame, and he never ceased to feel the consequences through the remainder of his life.

During the siege, Captain Glover died at Jamaica, and Nelson was appointed to his vacant command in the *Jason*, of 44 guns, Collingwood being at the same time made post on board the *Hinchinbrook*. Nelson joined his new command; but though the admiral had him nursed at his own residence, and the best medical aid was afforded, yet his constitution was so severely affected, that it was deemed necessary that he should return to England. Accordingly he sailed in the *Lion*, 64, commanded by the Honourable William Cornwallis; and to the indefatigable care of this gallant but rough seaman, Nelson believed himself to be indebted for the prolongation of his life.

On his arrival in England, the emaciated and helpless young captain was conveyed on shore, and carried to Bath, where the effects of the change, and the waters, produced a satisfactory result; and at the end of three months he found himself so far recovered, that to remain any longer idle was distressing to him. He hastened to the metropolis, applied for employment, and in August 1781, he was appointed to the command of the *Albemarle*, 28, and was kept, during the ensuing winter, on that coldest and most unpleasant of stations—the North Sea.

The war at this time carried on against France and the United States rendered it necessary that British merchant ships, in their voyages across the Atlantic, should be protected by vessels of war. In April 1782, Nelson went

with the *Albemarle* as part of a convoy to Newfoundland and Quebec, and afterwards cruised in Boston Bay. While here, he captured a fishing-schooner, and although the master of this small craft pled hard for liberty, the whole of his property being embarked in his vessel, and having a wife and family at home, Nelson was inexorable, and, retaining his vessel, kept him as pilot. The taking of helpless fishing-vessels during war has been generally condemned as an act of tyranny, and is so rarely practised, that the capture on the present occasion is only excusable in Nelson from the emergency in which he was placed. The result, at anyrate, proved that he acted from no bad feeling. Four French sail-of-the-line, and a large frigate, came out from Boston to capture the *Albemarle*, and as their sailing was superior, there was every prospect of her being taken; but Nelson, guided by the master of the captured schooner, boldly ran amongst the many shoals of St George's Bank, where his larger pursuers did not deem it advisable to follow him. The frigate continued the chase; but seeing that Nelson had thrown his main-topsail to the mast to wait for him, he discontinued his pursuit, and joined the squadron. For this service the fishing-schooner was restored to its owner, with a certificate from Nelson to secure its master from being molested by any other vessel. The grateful man afterwards came at night, at the hazard of his life, to the ship with a present of sheep, poultry, and vegetables, which proved a seasonable supply, as the scurvy was very bad amongst the seamen. The certificate then given is still preserved in Boston.

In October 1782, the *Albemarle* was ordered to take a convoy from Quebec to New York, where Nelson found Lord Hood, and accompanied him to the West Indies. Here he was introduced to Prince William Henry (after-

wards king of England), who was a midshipman in the flagship, the *Barfleur*, 98. Their first interview was rather remarkable. As a matter of course, his royal highness had heard much of Nelson, and picturing his appearance and stature in accordance with the fame he had acquired, he expected to see something noble-looking and gigantic. His surprise was great when he found him 'the merest boy of a captain he had ever seen, dressed in a full gold-laced uniform coat, an old-fashioned white waistcoat, slashed in front, and the flaps hanging down over his thighs, white knee-breeches, buckles in his shoes, and his hair, lank and unpowdered, tied behind in a stiff Hessian tail of considerable length.' His royal highness could not conceive who he was, or what he wanted; but Lord Hood soon solved the mystery by an introduction, and telling the prince that 'if he wished for any information upon naval tactics, he knew of no officer of the fleet more capable of affording it.' From this period the prince became the firm friend of Nelson, and declared that 'his address and conversation were irresistibly pleasing; and when he spoke on professional subjects, it was with an enthusiasm that evidenced how much his whole soul was engaged in them.'

From his earliest years Nelson possessed a happy power of making friends, and the still happier power of securing their friendship when once it was gained. His character was firm, but mild and conciliating; and though the ebullitions of temper, arising from the irritation caused by bodily infirmities, would at times manifest themselves, yet these instances were rare; and no one could be more ready to offer an apology, or make an atonement, when he conceived that his words or actions had been harsh or unjust. The seamen loved him with a fervour peculiar to their character; for though he was strict in discipline, he was

ever ready to give encouragement, and never flinched from his own duty, however severe. He led them in their enterprises, bore more than a due proportion of their hardships, and in difficult circumstances indulged in no better fare than themselves.

To the officers under him he was considerate and kind; and when a youngster who had never before washed his hands in salt water joined him, he invariably made it a rule to encourage him in every possible way, probably remembering what he had himself suffered when he first stepped on board a ship of war. We shall give an instance of his readiness to render justice to every one. It appears that Lord Hood placed great reliance on his judgment and skill. His lordship, apprehensive that the French would endeavour to escape through some of the intricate passages of the Bahamas, said to Nelson: 'I suppose, sir, from the length of time you were cruising among the Bahama Keys, you must have a good knowledge of the pilotage?' Nelson replied: 'It is true, my lord, I have made myself well acquainted with the different channels, but in that respect my *second-lieutenant* is by far my superior.'

Intelligence was received that the French had got into Puerto Cabello, on the coast of Venezuela, and Nelson took his station between that port and La Guayra, where he cruised under French colours. It happened that one of the royal launches belonging to the Spaniards, deceived by the appearance of the *Albemarle*, came within hail of her, and the officers were invited in the French language to 'come on board.' They did so without hesitation, and freely gave information respecting the numbers and force of the enemy. The officers and crew of the launch, supposing that the frigate was recently from France, were anxious to obtain intelligence of what was passing in that

country, and their surprise may be conjectured when they found themselves prisoners. Nelson, however, treated them with the utmost urbanity; the men were supplied with food by the brave tars, and the officers (amongst whom was a prince of the German empire, and brother to the heir of the Electorate of Bavaria, with several Frenchmen of distinction, who, in the pursuit of science, were collecting specimens in the various departments of natural history) were regaled at Nelson's own table with the best his ship afforded.

Nevertheless they were not much at ease when they looked upon themselves as captives, and their scientific pursuits arrested. For a short interval Nelson enjoyed their embarrassment and chagrin; but he was too noble-minded to triumph over distress when it was in his power to relieve it; and therefore, with all the generosity characteristic of his nature, he told them 'they were perfectly free, and might depart with their boat and all in it as soon as they wished;' and it may be truly believed that no one was better pleased with this act than Nelson himself.

In the beginning of 1783, war between England and France and Spain ceased, and the unhappy and ill-conceived contest with the American colonists was likewise terminated. Nelson returned home, and his ship was paid off at Portsmouth (July 31). He had, before this time, formed an attachment to a young lady, daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England, and he was desirous of marrying; but his narrow circumstances forbade their union, and he was even induced to reside for some time in France, that he might economise his half-pay. Returning early in the ensuing year, he obtained an appointment to the *Boreas*, 28 guns, ready to sail for the Leeward Islands with the lady of the commander-in-chief, Sir Richard Hughes, and

her family. Being on the peace establishment, the frigate's complement of officers was considerably increased. There were not fewer than thirty young gentlemen as volunteers of the first class, and midshipmen; and Nelson generously took upon himself the task of superintending their nautical education, and never missed a day visiting the school-room, and personally aiding the youngsters in their studies. Nor did his benevolence stop here; for, being an excellent practical seaman himself, he lost no opportunity of imparting the best instruction to 'his boys.' If he saw any of the lads manifest symptoms of fear on first going aloft, he would ascend the rigging himself, to show how easily it might be accomplished; and by these means he created a stimulus that never failed to produce the best effects.

In the course of his service at this period, Nelson showed that he was not only a bold and able seaman, but a man of a sagacious and determined mind. Previous to the American colonies declaring their independence of England, they enjoyed, almost exclusively, the trade with the West India Islands; and, taking advantage of their vessels still retaining British registers, they continued to carry on their traffic as subjects of Great Britain, to the injury of the loyalists who had settled in Nova Scotia. The Navigation Act of England expressly prohibited all foreigners from carrying on trade with the West Indies, and Nelson, considering the Americans as foreigners since their separation from the mother-country, resolved to carry out the provisions of the act to its fullest extent.

He gave the Americans warning of his intention, and sent many away, that it might not be charged upon him that he had taken undue advantage of them. He apprised the admiral, Sir Richard Hughes, of his design, who at first gave it his sanction, but subsequently withdrew it, and sent

Nelson a written order not to proceed. Major-general Sir Thomas Shirley, governor of the Leeward Islands, also opposed the captain of the *Boreas*, and at an interview between the two officers, Sir Thomas angrily exclaimed that 'old generals were not in the habit of taking advice from young gentlemen.' To which Nelson replied: 'Sir, the prime-minister of England is not older than I am, and I think myself as capable of commanding one of his Majesty's ships as Mr Pitt is of governing the state.'

The alternative with him was, that he must either disobey the order of the admiral, or render acts of parliament a nullity; and therefore, relying on his integrity, he wrote to the admiral, declining obedience to his instruction. Sir Richard was extremely angry, and would have superseded Nelson; but the flag-captain dissuaded him from it, and told him that the whole squadron considered the order illegal. The admiral afterwards became convinced of his error, and thanked Nelson for having shown it to him.

Nelson prepared to act with promptitude, in which he was joined by his old friend Collingwood, who commanded the *Mediator* frigate, and his brother, who commanded the *Rattler* sloop. At Nevis, four Americans were seized, both hulls and cargoes, and condemned in the Admiralty Court. The owners instituted suits against Nelson, and laid their damages at £40,000. Frequent attempts were made to arrest him; but through the address of his first-lieutenant, Mr Wallis, he escaped the process. One day an officer, remarking upon the harassment and restraint under which he laboured, happened to use the word 'pity.' Nelson sharply answered: 'Pity, did you say? I shall live, sir, to be envied, and to that point I shall always direct my course.' Representations being made to the king, orders were sent

out that he should be defended at the expense of the crown, and at his suggestions the Registry Act was framed.

This approbation of his sovereign and the government could not but be welcome to him; but when the thanks of the Treasury were transmitted to Sir Richard Hughes for that which Nelson had performed in defiance of the admiral, he felt both offended and indignant; under a conviction, however, that he had fulfilled his duty, he took no further notice of the affair.

While on the West India station, Nelson married (March 11, 1787) Mrs Nisbet, widow of a physician in Nevis, and niece of Mr Herbert, the president of that island. Mr Herbert, it appears, had been offended with his daughter, and expressed a determination to bequeath all his property to his niece; but Nelson's noble mind scorned to profit by such a resolve. He unceasingly pleaded for the daughter, and at length succeeded in accomplishing a reconciliation between Mr Herbert and his child.


Nelson's unaccommodating integrity brought him at this time into discredit with certain Admiralty functionaries. Becoming aware, and obtaining proofs, of vast frauds being practised on government in the West Indies, he transmitted the information to the proper quarter, and for his pains was ordered to return with his vessel to England. This was a gross and most undeserved indignity; for no officer had conducted himself with more ability. On his return he was attacked by fever and sore throat, but he never quitted his ship; and when orders arrived for her to be paid off, he solemnly declared his intention to resign his commission, and for this purpose he immediately waited upon the first lord of the Admiralty. Lord Howe conversed with him for some time, and having become fully satisfied of his rigid integrity and honour, his lordship presented

him to the king, who received him graciously. Pleased with his reception, he not only remained in the service, but, by dint of exertion, brought the speculators to justice, and caused an immense saving to government.

Having no command, he took his wife and step-son to visit his father at Burnham Thorpe, where he occupied himself in field-sports and agriculture, Mrs Nelson generally accompanying him. But he was not suffered to remain in perfect quiet. The Americans renewed their vexatious actions, laying the damages at £20,000 ; and he would have quitted England for France, had he not received the assurances of the administration that all necessary protection and support would be afforded to him.

CHAPTER III.

CAREER DURING THE FRENCH WAR.

E have now to follow Nelson into the heat of the great war in which he obtained such high distinction. Hitherto, his adventurous character had enjoyed but limited scope ; now, it was to be afforded a wide field for exertion. The French having declared war against Great Britain, February 1, 1793, a contest began, which soon brought Spain and Holland into union with France, and caused the English, with some wretched allies, to maintain one of the most tremendous struggles known in history. In anticipation of this event, the British navy was strengthened, and Nelson, among other adventurers, applied for an appointment. After repeated applications, he was successful, and procured the command

of the *Agamemnon*, 64 guns, with an entirely new company of men; these in a short time he had the address to train up to an equality with any seamen in the service.

The *Agamemnon* left England in the squadron of Admiral Hotham, to join Lord Hood in the Mediterranean. The object of this expedition was to aid the French royalists who stood out against the Revolution; and by that unfortunate party Toulon was surrendered to the English and Spanish fleets, in trust for the nominal sovereign of France, Louis XVII.

Previous to Lord Hood entering the port, the *Agamemnon* was sent with despatches for Sir William Hamilton, the ambassador at Naples; and Nelson, having executed his commission, was ordered to join Commodore Linzee at Tunis. Whilst running along the coast of Sardinia, he discovered five vessels supposed to be enemies, and immediately gave chase. They proved to be three 44-gun frigates, a corvette of 24 guns, and a brig of 12—making a total force of 168 guns and about 1400 men; whilst the *Agamemnon* carried 70 guns, and could muster only 345 men at quarters. Notwithstanding this immense disparity, Nelson engaged one of the frigates (the *Melpomene*), and would certainly have captured her, but for the others coming up to her relief. She was so mauled, that the French made no pursuit of the *Agamemnon*, but remained by their consort to render her assistance. Nelson would have been mad to have awaited the conjoined attack of a squadron so vastly superior in strength; he therefore pursued his course to Tunis, and shortly afterwards was sent with a small squadron to act with the troops under General Paoli in Corsica, against the domination of France. Whilst cruising with his squadron off St Fiorenzo, he landed with 120 men, and destroyed a storehouse filled with flour

for the French garrison, which stood near their only mill. This mill he burned, and after throwing the flour into the sea, re-embarked without the loss of a single man, though 1000 soldiers had been sent against him. His constant activity afloat intercepted all supplies to the enemy; and day and night he was engaged in cutting out vessels from the bays and ports upon the coast, or assaulting the French forts and outposts.

These attacks not only afforded sharp practice for his crew, but they tended also greatly to alarm and annoy the enemy. Troops were landed under General Dundas, and on the evacuation of Toulon, Lord Hood also repaired to the spot. The French quitted St Fiorenzo, and retreated across the neck of land at the northern extremity of the island to the strong fortress of Bastia, which the British proposed to assault; but General Dundas considered it impracticable. This did not exactly suit the temperament of Nelson, who declared that 'with 500 men, he would have stormed the town, under a full conviction that he should have carried it.' Lord Hood determined upon laying siege to the place; but neither Dundas nor General D'Aubant, who succeeded to the command of the army, would render any aid, and the siege was commenced, in defiance of the generals, with 1183 soldiers, artillerymen, and marines, and 250 sailors—there being then five good regiments idle at St Fiorenzo.

Nelson was now greatly exhilarated; he served on shore with the rank of brigadier, and not only personally superintended the erecting of batteries and getting guns up the mountains, but also frequently lent a hand to the more laborious part. The siege was carried on with vigour by this handful of men. On the 19th May 1794 the enemy offered to capitulate. The five idle regiments marched

over from St Fiorenzo; and the next morning those who had not been allowed by their commander-in-chief to share in the peril and the toil, entered Bastia to reap the reward; but not till 4000 soldiers, who defended the place, had laid down their arms to about 1200 soldiers, marines, and seamen. The commanders of the idle troops received applause; Nelson, on whom the weight of service principally devolved, was not even mentioned, except by his admiral, Lord Hood, who spoke of him in the highest terms.

Calvi still held out; and after a short cruise, in which a French fleet, coming out to relieve the island, was forced to retire under the security of their batteries on shore, the siege of Calvi was begun, Sir Charles Stuart having command of the land forces, and Nelson working with might and main at the advanced batteries. In a letter to Lord Hood he remarks: 'We will fag ourselves to death before any blame shall lie at our doors. I trust it will not be forgotten that twenty-five pieces of heavy ordnance have been dragged to the different batteries, mounted, and all but three fought by seamen, except one artilleryman to point the guns.' At this time Nelson suffered severely from the diseases incidental to the climate, as well as from his arduous exertions and anxiety of mind; added to these, a shot striking the battery near him, forced a small piece of stone into his right eye, and deprived him of the sight of it for ever. His head also was much cut; but he only lay aside for one day; and then, though suffering much from pain, returned with renewed alacrity to his duty. The utmost notice he took of this misfortune was in a letter to his relation, William Suckling, in which he says: 'You will be surprised when I say I was wounded in the head by stones from the merlon of our battery. My right eye

is cut entirely down, but the surgeons flatter me I shall not entirely lose my sight of that eye. At present I can distinguish light from dark, but no object. It confined me one day, when, thank God, I was able to attend to my duty.'

On the 10th August 1794, Calvi surrendered. After its fall, Nelson proceeded to Genoa in the *Agamemnon*, which ship he would not quit, though several seventy-fours had been offered to him, preferring to remain with his brave Norfolkmen, who had so faithfully served with him. At Genoa the doge behaved to him with great courtesy. Lord Hood was ordered home, and Vice-admiral Hotham succeeding to the chief command in the Mediterranean, Nelson was especially appointed to watch the French fleet in Toulon, which, by the junction of ships from Gourjeau Bay, consisted of sixteen sail-of-the-line, ten frigates and corvettes, whose intentions, it was supposed, were the retaking of Corsica, now formally annexed to the crown of Great Britain. There were likewise seven sail-of-the-line on the stocks, and the *neutral* state of Genoa was liberally supplying the French with materials. Admiral Hotham, whilst at Leghorn, received intelligence that the Toulon fleet had put to sea, and with his whole force he immediately went in search of it. He had fourteen sail-of-the-line, and a Neapolitan 74; but the English ships were scarcely more than half-manned—only 7650 men amongst the whole. The enemy, besides the superiority in vessels, had not fewer than 16,900 men.

The two fleets met (March 13, 1795). That of France had been sent out purposely to fight the English; but when in sight of the British flag they had no desire to engage; for, after manœuvring a whole day, they took to flight, and Admiral Hotham went in chase, during which the *Ça-Ira*,

84, lost her fore and main topmasts, and the *Inconstant* frigate being the nearest, fired at her, but was obliged to sheer off. A French frigate took the 84 in tow, whilst the *Sans Culottes*, 120, and the *Jean Barras*, kept pretty close on her weather-bow. Nelson's eagerness to get into the fight induced him to carry sail till he had distanced every ship in his own fleet by several miles. Still he pressed on, purposing to reserve his fire till he was nearly touching the Frenchman's stern; but finding that her stern-chase guns were admirably pointed, so that almost every shot struck the *Agamemnon*, he yawed about from starboard to port, and from port to starboard, delivering his broadsides with great precision, rending the canvas of the enemy into ribbons, and carrying away her mizzen-topmast and cross jack-yard. This manoeuvre he practised two hours and a half, till the other line-of-battle ships came to the support of the *Ça-Ira*. The admiral made the signal for the van ships to join him, with which Nelson complied. Notwithstanding this sharp encounter, the *Agamemnon* had only six men hurt—the *Ça-Ira* lost 110 men.

At daylight the following morning, the body of the French fleet was seen about five miles distant, the *Ça-Ira*, and the *Censeur*, 74, that had her in tow, being about a mile and a half astern of the rest. Signal was made by the English admiral to cut these ships off, and again the crew of the *Agamemnon* not only engaged their colossal opponent of the day previous, but also the *Censeur*, both of which subsequently struck.

On securing the two prizes, Nelson hastened to Admiral Hotham, and proposed that, while two of the English seventy-fours which had been most crippled, and four frigates, should be left in charge of the captured ships, the rest of the fleet should follow up the advantage gained :

but the admiral expressed himself contented; adding: 'We have done very well.' In a letter commenting on this affair, Nelson says: 'Now, had we taken ten sail, and allowed the eleventh to have escaped when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done. Goodall backed me; I got him to write to the admiral; but it would not do. We should have had such a day as, I believe, the annals of England never produced. I wish to be an admiral, and in command of the English fleet. Sure I am, had I commanded on the 14th, that either the whole of the French fleet would have graced my triumph, or I should have been in a dreadful scrape.' Certain it is that, with the spirit manifested by the seamen, much more ought to have been done. It is true that the Admiralty, with a petty parsimony, had very injuriously neglected the naval force in the Mediterranean: these ships were in bad condition, and the depôts were nearly empty of stores, nor was there a single lower mast to be obtained at Gibraltar.

About this time Admiral Man arrived with a squadron of five sail-of-the-line; but even with this reinforcement, the English were much inferior to the French in numbers, so that the arrival of a Neapolitan 74 to strengthen them was hailed with joy. Nelson complained very much of this recklessness in the administration; they, however, made him a colonel of marines, a mark of distinction that pleased him. He was now sent, with a squadron of eight frigates under his command, to co-operate with the Austrian general, De Vins. He left the English fleet at St Fiorenzo; but off Cape de Mele fell in with the French fleet, which chased his squadron back to St Fiorenzo; and Admiral Hotham got under way as soon as possible to drive them off. Only a partial action ensued, in which *L'Alcide*, a

French 74, struck, but afterwards caught fire and was destroyed. The *Agamemnon* was again sharply engaged; but Admiral Hotham called her off, and the French fleet got into Frejus Bay. Nelson pursued his course with his squadron; and through his advice to the British envoy, Mr Drake, put a stop to the traffic of neutrals with the French. He also projected a series of conquests over the armies of Bonaparte; but the Austrian general manifested much backwardness, and Admiral Hotham acted upon a cautious system detrimental to the public service.

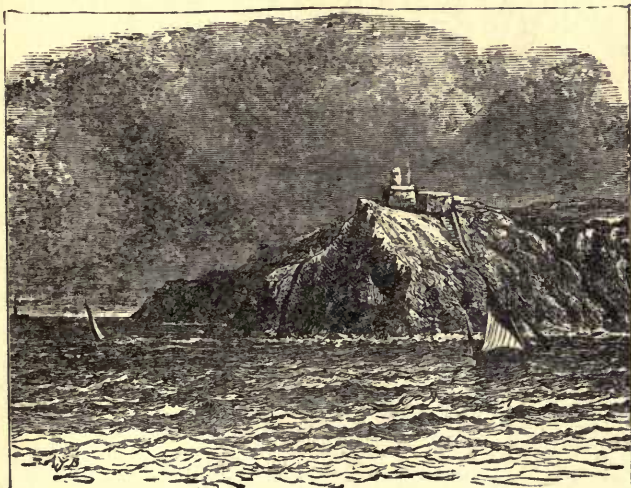
The neutral port of Genoa was filled with small French privateers and rowboats, that went out in the evening and picked up any English merchant vessel that was unfortunate enough to fall in their way. At length an Austrian commissary, with £10,000 in money, travelling on neutral ground between Genoa and Vado, was robbed of the whole amount at Voltri by the boat's crew of a French frigate then lying at Genoa; and on the following day men were publicly entered in the streets of that city for the French service; consequently all neutral disguise was at an end. Nelson, who had long suspected the faith of the Austrians, became satisfied of the treachery that was practising, but possessed a force totally inadequate to prevent the consequences that were likely to ensue. Sir Hyde Parker, who had for the time succeeded Admiral Hotham in the command, reduced his strength still more by withdrawing every ship except a frigate and a brig; yet even with these he still persevered unflinchingly, till the disgraceful defeat of the Austrian army; General De Vins, under pretence of illness, having resigned his command in the middle of the battle. Never was victory more complete on the part of the French; never was cowardice more powerfully manifested than by the Austrians.

This defeat of our allies placed the Genoese coast, from Savona to Voltri, in the hands of the French ; and Nelson, finding he could no longer be of material service, went to Leghorn to refit. On being hauled into dock, the *Agamemnon*, though strapped with hawsers round the hull, could barely be held together, and her masts, yards, sails, and rigging were miserably cut and rent. She was, after much labour, patched up and repaired, and sailed for St Fiorenzo Bay, where, to his great gratification, Nelson found Sir John Jervis, who had assumed the entire command of the Mediterranean fleet. The manner in which the admiral received Captain Nelson was highly flattering and grateful to the latter, who, at Sir John's request, resumed his station in the Gulf of Genoa, to act against Bonaparte, who was then at the head of the army in Italy. Here he acted with great promptitude and vigilance, till orders arrived from the British government to evacuate Corsica ; and Nelson was employed in bringing away the troops and stores. Having performed this rather degrading task, he was ordered to hoist a broad pennant, with the rank of commodore, on board the *Minerva* frigate, and proceed to Porto Ferrago, with the *Blanche* frigate under his command. On the passage they fell in with two Spanish frigates, one of which the *Minerva* captured, after a smart action. She had scarcely taken possession of her prize, when another Spanish frigate came up, and a second engagement ensued. This new opponent, however, after an hour's fighting, hauled off ; and a Spanish squadron, of two ships-of-the-line and two frigates, heaving in sight, Nelson was compelled to abandon his prize and retire. All credit for these gallant actions Nelson attributed to his captain, George Cockburn, and the excellent crew he commanded.

CHAPTER IV.

BATTLE OFF CAPE ST VINCENT.

HAVING fulfilled his orders at Porto Ferrago, he went in search of the admiral; but in the mouth of the straits he was, on the 11th February 1797, chased by two Spanish ships-of-the-line, and soon after-



Cape St Vincent.

wards came in sight of the whole Spanish fleet. On the 13th he was enabled to communicate this to Sir John Jervis, whom he found off Cape St Vincent. He was then

ordered to shift his broad pennant to the *Captain*, 74, Captain R. W. Miller. On the morning of the 14th, day broke with light winds and foggy weather, and the Spanish fleet was discovered through the haze much scattered, while the British ships preserved close order of battle; and by carrying a press of sail, passed through the Spanish fleet, so as to cut off nine ships from the main body. The Spanish admiral, who was to windward, attempted to join his ships to leeward, which Nelson, who was in the rear, perceiving, he had no sooner passed the rear of the windward ships of the enemy than, notwithstanding the signal from Sir John Jervis to tack in succession, he ordered the *Captain* to be wore round, and stood towards the Spaniards, thus frustrating their union. The sixth ship from the Spanish rear was the *Santissima Trinidad*, of 136 guns upon four decks, carrying the flag of the Spanish admiral. Without a moment's hesitation, Nelson, in his little 74, not only engaged this truly formidable opponent, but had also to contend against her seconds, ahead and astern, each of three decks.

Nelson's manœuvre, and the purport of it, was quickly revealed to the British fleet, and the most enthusiastic admiration, mingled with anxiety, pervaded every breast as they saw three or four other large Spanish ships gathering round him. His old messmate, Trowbridge, in the *Culloden*, 74, hastened to his support, and was followed by the *Blenheim*, 90, Captain Frederick, who took off the heat of the fire from the *Captain*. The brave Collingwood, in the *Excellent*, soon afterwards joined in the fight, and one or two of the Spaniards hauled down their colours. Rear-admiral Parker, with the *Prince George*, *Orion*, *Irresistible*, and *Diadem*, were on the advance; and the Spanish admiral, instead of joining his ships to leeward, made

signal for his fleet to haul their wind on the larboard tack, and make sail.

Nelson, after quitting the *Santissima Trinidad*, engaged the *San Josef*, a three-decker, carrying a rear-admiral's flag, and the *San Nicolas*, 80, till these latter two ships got foul of each other, when the commodore ordered the boarders to be called, and the helm of the *Captain* being clapped a-starboard, her sprit-sail yard hooked in the main-rigging of the *San Nicolas*, and that desperate rush of seamen, which must be witnessed to be properly understood, ensued. Lieutenant Berry boarded by the mizzen-rigging of the enemy, the commodore entered by the quarter-gallery window; but the affray did not last long; the Spanish brigadier fell whilst retreating to his quarter-deck; and the *San Nicolas* was soon in full possession of her conquerors.

The stern windows of the *San Josef* were directly over the weather-beam of the *San Nicolas*, and from these and the poop the Spaniards kept up a galling fire of musketry upon the British in the prize; but Nelson was equal to this emergency, and calling for more men from the *Captain*, he shouted: 'Westminster Abbey, or glorious victory!' and, taking the lead, boarded the three-decker: a Spanish officer looked over the quarter-deck rail and said they surrendered. Nelson ascended to the quarter-deck, where he received the sword of the Spanish captain, who stated that the admiral was 'below dying of his wounds.' The officers in succession tendered the commodore their swords, which he passed to a Norfolk man, one of his old Agamemnons, who tucked them under his left arm with the same composure as if collecting sticks for a fagot. To estimate properly the nature of the victory which Nelson had achieved, it may be mentioned that, while the Spanish

fleet consisted of twenty-seven sail-of-the-line and nine frigates—the whole carrying 2282 guns—the British fleet amounted to fifteen sail-of-the-line, four frigates, and three smaller vessels, carrying an aggregate of 1232 guns.

As soon as the battle was over, Nelson went on board the admiral's ship. Sir John Jervis took the commodore in his arms on the quarter-deck, and declared that 'he could not sufficiently thank him.' Yet in his public despatches the admiral made no particular mention of Nelson, or his gallant achievement by which the conquest was gained. The commander-in-chief, who did scarcely anything, was created Earl St Vincent, with a pension of £3000 a year; and the intrepid and heroic Nelson (whose rank as rear-admiral was on its way to him at the time of the action) received the Order of the Bath. The real facts, however, could not be long concealed from the nation; the public press teemed with the gallant exploit; applause and congratulations poured in from all quarters; and though Sir John Jervis got the earldom, it was Nelson who received all the honour.

Soon afterwards, Sir Horatio hoisted his flag (blue at the mizzen) in the *Theseus*, 74, having Captain Miller under him. This ship had been prominent in the mutiny in England; but the rear-admiral had not long been on board before a paper was picked up on the quarter-deck with these words: 'Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Captain Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy and comfortable, and will shed every drop of blood in our veins to support them; and the name of the *Theseus* shall be immortalised as high as the *Captain's*.'

At the blockade of Cadiz, Sir Horatio had the command of the inshore squadron; and in a boat action at night his

barge got alongside of a large Spanish launch of twenty-six men. Nelson had only his ten bargemen, Captain Freemantle, and John Sykes, his cockswain. The contest was desperate—hand to hand with cutlasses. Sykes twice saved the admiral's life by receiving the blows—once upon his own head—that were intended for his chief. Eighteen of the enemy were killed, and all the rest wounded, including the commandant: the launch was captured.

About a fortnight after this encounter the rear-admiral led an expedition against the island of Teneriffe; but it utterly failed; though even in this instance the character of Englishmen was respected by the Spaniards. Nelson was stepping out of his boat at the landing, when a shot struck his right elbow and shattered it. He had drawn his sword, which was given him by his uncle Captain Suckling; the blow forced him to drop it; but catching it with his left hand, he remarked that 'he had promised never to part with it while he lived.' His step-son, Lieutenant Nisbet, got him into the boat, and, whilst rowing off to the *Theseus* under the enemy's guns, the *Fox* cutter was sunk by a shot, and 97 men perished in her. Nelson ordered his boat to the assistance of those who were swimming; and, notwithstanding the great anguish he was suffering, personally assisted in rescuing many from death: 83 were saved. On getting on board his own ship, his arm was amputated, and his mind appears to have taken a rather gloomy view of his future prospects.


He returned to England, where distinguished honours awaited him. The freedom of the cities of London and Bristol were presented to him, and he was awarded a pension of £1000 a year. The requisite memorial of his services stated that he had been four times engaged with fleets, and no less than one hundred and twenty times in

action ; had assisted at the capture of seven sail-of-the-line, six frigates, four corvettes, eleven privateers of different sizes, and taken or destroyed nearly fifty sail of merchant vessels. On his appearance at court, after being invested with the Order of the Bath, the king received him most graciously, and condoled with him on the loss he had sustained, which he feared might deprive the country of his future services. Nelson replied : ‘I can never think *that* a loss which the performance of my duty has occasioned ; and so long as I have a foot to stand on, I will combat for my king and country.’

When the rear-admiral’s arm was amputated, a nerve had been taken up with, or instead of, an artery, and the constant irritation and anguish this caused almost wore out his already shattered frame ; the ligature at last came away, and he was freed from pain. On the occasion of his recovery, with that pious feeling which has been already remarked as a feature of his character, he transmitted a note of thanks to the minister of St George’s, Hanover Square : ‘An officer desires to return thanks to Almighty God for his perfect recovery from a severe wound, and also for the many mercies bestowed on him.’

CHAPTER V.

BATTLE OF THE NILE, AND EXPEDITION AGAINST DENMARK.

ARLY in the year 1798, Sir Horatio hoisted his flag in the *Vanguard*, 74, and on the 29th April he joined Earl St Vincent off Cadiz. The next day he was detached from the commander-in-chief

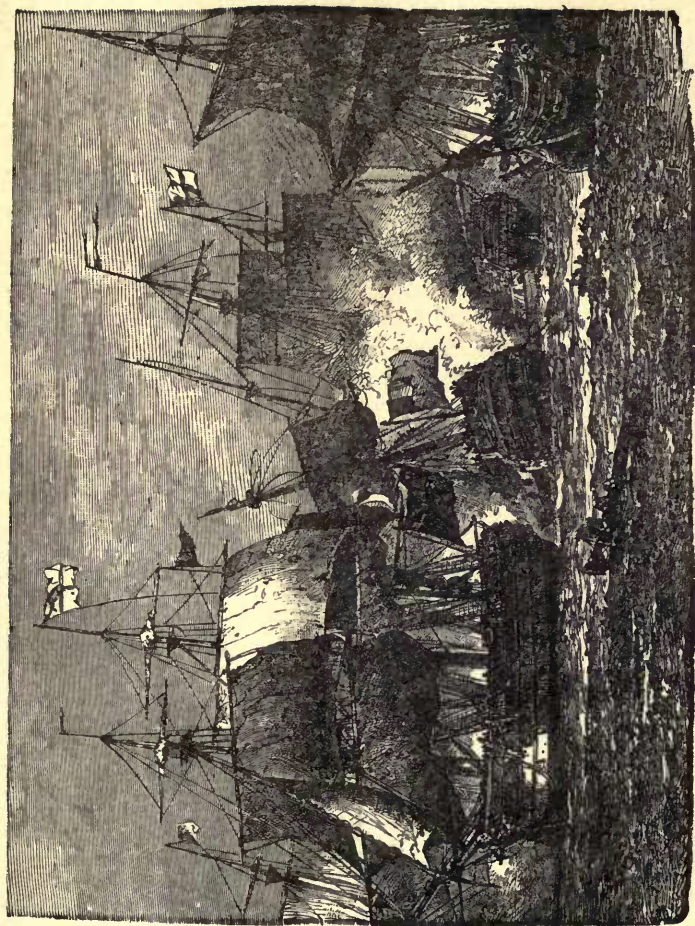
with two seventy-fours, two frigates, and a sloop of war, and was shortly afterwards joined by Trowbridge in the *Culloden*, with ten more sail-of-the-line, the whole intended to watch the proceedings of an expedition then fitting out at Toulon, and supposed to be destined for Malta and Egypt. The first news Nelson received of this armament was that it had taken Malta, and he prepared to attack the fleet at anchor; but further intelligence told him that it had already sailed; and still conjecturing it had gone to Egypt, thither did Nelson follow. He arrived off Alexandria on the 28th of June; but the French were not there, and he returned to Sicily without obtaining any information of them.

Through the secret agency of Sir William Hamilton, the ambassador at Naples, he obtained requisite supplies, and again renewed his search, endeavouring to gain intelligence wherever he could; till at last he resolved once more to visit Alexandria, where, on the forenoon of the 1st August 1798, he saw the French fleet at anchor in Aboukir Bay, and made immediate dispositions for the attack. The English had thirteen ships-of-the-line, all seventy-fours, and one 50, carrying in the whole 1012 guns and 8068 men. The French had the same number of line-of-battle ships, of which there was one of 120 guns and three of 80: there were, besides, four frigates. The number of their men was 11,230, and the number of guns 1196. Nelson's plan was to double upon the French, and anchor his ships, one on the outer bow, and another on the outer quarter of each ship of the enemy's as far as his force would extend. A heavy cannonade commenced as the British advanced; but not a shot was returned, as the crews were aloft furling sails. At length, when anchored mostly by the stern, the English opened a destructive fire. The *Vanguard* had six

colours flying in different parts of the rigging; and the whole of the ships being judiciously placed, the battle raged with the utmost fury. Unfortunately the *Culloden* took the ground; and though she served as a beacon to warn others of the danger, yet she could not join the fight. It was quite dark before the whole of the fleet had anchored.

It was about the middle of the action, and after several French ships had struck, that Nelson was severely cut on the head by either a heavy splinter or langrage; the skin of his forehead was stript away, and hung down over his face. He was carried below to the cockpit, and, from the great effusion of blood, it was feared the wound was mortal. The surgeon hurrying to examine him, he exclaimed: 'No, I will take my turn with my brave fellows;' and believing himself to be dying, he signed a post-captain's commission for Thomas Hardy, who commanded the *Mutine* brig. When the surgeon had examined the wound, and pronounced it to be a severe flesh wound that was not mortal, the utmost joy prevailed; and as soon as it was dressed, he sat down and began the official letter which appeared in the *Gazette*.

The largest of the French ships, *L'Orient*, carrying the flag of Admiral Brueys, took fire, and the flames, amidst the darkness of night, rendered the colours of both fleets distinguishable. Nelson, with his head bandaged, and almost deprived of sight, found his way to the quarter-deck of the *Vanguard*, and despatched boats to rescue all they could from the burning pile; but about ten o'clock she blew up with an explosion that shook every ship, and from the awe which the spectacle occasioned, reduced every vessel on both sides to silence for several minutes. The cannonading was partially continued till three in the



Battle of the Nile.

morning, when it ceased, leaving the English in possession of nine French ships-of-the-line. Two were burnt; and two, with a couple of frigates, effected their escape. Of the other two frigates, one was sunk; the second, after hauling down her colours, was set fire to by her captain, and destroyed. The loss of the English, in killed and wounded, was 895; that of the French, 5225; the rest, including the wounded, were sent on shore.

As soon as the conquest was completed, Nelson ordered on board every ship a thanksgiving for the victory which had blessed his majesty's arms; and the solemn stillness that prevailed throughout the fleet during the performance of this ceremony made a deep impression upon both friends and foes. Nelson had been well aware that the object of the French army was to attack our possessions in the East Indies; and now that this was frustrated, he despatched an officer to Bombay, who conveyed information to the governor of the total destruction of the fleet, and thus was prevented an enormous outlay for defensive operations, which had been already begun.

The victory of the Nile was received by the nation with delight, for it was felt to have at once frustrated the designs of Bonaparte, and vastly elevated the reputation of the British navy. So highly were Nelson's achievements on this occasion esteemed, that he was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and a pension of £2000 a year was granted for his own life and two successors. The parliament of Ireland also granted him a pension of £1000 per annum; the East India Company presented him with £10,000; and various other gifts were bestowed from different bodies in England: whilst from Turkey, Sicily, Naples, Sardinia, &c., rich presents were forwarded.

It is delightful, amidst all Nelson's successes in the cruel business of war, to find symptoms of his generous nature continually breaking out. When the government was distributing its honours, he was particularly anxious that his old friend Trowbridge and his first-lieutenant should not be overlooked. But the *Culloden* having been stranded in the commencement of the action, it seemed quite impossible to official judgment that her officers should be in any way distinguished. Nelson pleaded earnestly against this decision. 'It was Trowbridge,' he said, 'who equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse; it was Trowbridge who exerted himself for me after the action; it was Trowbridge who saved the *Culloden*, when none that I know in the service would have attempted it.' It is distressing to add that these disinterested solicitations did not prevail with respect to Trowbridge; Nelson only obtained permission to promote the lieutenant on the first vacancy.

Seventeen days after the battle, Nelson quitted Aboukir Bay for Naples, where he arrived on the 22d of September, in a state of the greatest weakness, in consequence of a severe illness which had attacked him on the passage. The Neapolitans and their court, apprised of his victory by two vessels which had preceded him, received him with all possible honours. He remained at that city till December, and it was on this occasion that his hitherto respectable character was first tarnished by a disgraceful connection with Lady Hamilton, which proved the bane of his future existence. It is painful to see dishonour thus at length fall, in the midst of great triumphs, upon one who had been entirely amiable and pure while struggling with all kinds of adverse circumstances. The worst, however, was not yet come. We have now to trace

the career of Nelson through a more historical dishonour; partly, however, the result of the other.

Naples was at this time overpowered by the French arms, and all that Nelson could do was to carry off the imbecile king and his court to Palermo. Aided by the French, a small party of Neapolitans, including many of the nobility, formed a republican government; but it did not last long. A change in the state of the French armies caused the withdrawal of most of the troops from Naples. The opportunity was taken by the king's friends to restore his sway. The handful of leading patriots could only throw themselves into two forts, and capitulate for their lives and property. At this crisis Nelson entered on the scene with his fleet, and, full of fervour for the interests of the king, and to gratify Lady Hamilton, he interfered to annul the terms of the capitulation. The unfortunate republicans were handed over to the vengeance of the court, which was sanguinary in the extreme. Nelson caused Prince Caraccioli to be tried by his enemies, and immediately hanged at the yard-arm of a Neapolitan vessel. His generous nature seems to have been on this occasion completely changed; and the whole series of transactions must ever remain a remarkable illustration of the power of one degrading error to produce others and worse.

After performing other important services, which the Neapolitan king acknowledged by conferring upon him the title of Duke of Bronté, with a wealthy appanage, Nelson, accompanied by Sir William and Lady Hamilton, returned to England, travelling through Germany to Hamburg by land. During his journey he received high honours from all authorities; and on reaching Yarmouth, the rejoicings were extreme. In the metropolis his lordship met with the most enthusiastic reception from the

sovereign as well as his subjects ; and the day succeeding his arrival being Lord Mayor's Day, he was invited to the civic feast, where a sword of 200 guineas' value was presented to him. Government having been made aware that Napoleon purposed obtaining possession of the fleets of the northern powers, to make up for those captured and destroyed by England, Sir Hyde Parker was sent with an adequate force to Copenhagen to secure the Danish ships, and Nelson was appointed to act under him. With twelve sail-of-the-line he boldly attacked the Danes, whose batteries ashore, as well as afloat, were extremely formidable. Sir Hyde Parker, with the rest of the fleet, lay at a considerable distance ; and Nelson was deprived of the support of two of his own squadron, that grounded on the shoals. Nevertheless his magnanimity did not desert him for one moment. The battle was one of the most determined and desperate that have been fought. About the middle of it, Sir Hyde Parker, who could perceive the hot fire that was kept up upon the British, hoisted the signal to 'discontinue the action.' This was reported to Nelson, who, placing his glass to his blind eye, declared that 'he could not see it ;' adding, 'Keep my flag for closer battle flying—nail it to the mast.'

A characteristic instance of Nelson's coolness occurred towards the close of the engagement. Desirous of sparing a further effusion of blood, his lordship wrote a letter to the crown-prince : 'Vice-admiral Lord Nelson has been commanded to spare Denmark when she no longer resists. The line of defence which covered her shores has struck to the British flag ; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, he must set on fire all the prizes that he has taken, without having the power of saving the men who have so nobly defended them. The brave Danes

are the brothers, and should never be the enemies, of the English.' His attendant placed a box of wafers before him, but Nelson put them aside, and ordered a candle to be brought, by which means he sealed the letter with wax, observing, that 'this was no time to appear hurried and informal.' A flag of truce conveyed the communication ashore; it led to the suspension of hostilities; and Nelson extricated his own shattered fleet from imminent peril, and brought out the prizes they had captured. The English sustained a loss in killed and wounded of 953; the Danes, including prisoners, of 6000.

In order to arrange preliminaries of peace, Nelson landed, and walking almost alone amidst the enemy he had been contending against, was received with silent respect. He afterwards partook of a repast prepared by the crown-prince. The prizes—six ships-of-the-line and eight praams—were safely brought out; but only one of the former was sent home, Sir Hyde Parker ordering the rest to be burned where they lay, so that their fine brass guns, which sank with the hulls, were afterwards recovered by the Danes. This proceeding was in opposition to the wishes of Nelson, who looked upon it as robbing the officers and seamen of their prize-money. His lordship was also extremely discontented at the dilatoriness of the commander-in-chief, for he apprehended the junction of the Russian and Swedish fleets to act against the English; and though he never doubted the achieving a victory over them, yet his mind was anxious to prevent the slaughter that must ensue. Sir Hyde sailed with the ships fit for service, leaving Nelson to follow with the rest; but the latter, on hearing that the English and Swedish fleets were near to each other, quitted his ship (the *St George*) in an open boat, and rowed nearly thirty miles, till he got

on board the *Elephant* about midnight—the wind cold and piercing—and in the hurry of departure his greatcoat had been left behind. The next day they saw the Swedish fleet, which took shelter in Carlsrona.

On the 5th May 1801, Sir Hyde Parker was recalled: Nelson received the appointment of commander-in-chief, and his title as viscount. Prompt measures immediately followed: by his active exertions, aided by the death of the Emperor Paul, the northern confederacy was broken up; and though Denmark prepared to resent the conduct of the English, and the crown-prince was still under the dictation of Napoleon, yet they were powerless to act.

Sir Charles Maurice Pole succeeded Nelson in the command; for the latter had earnestly entreated to be recalled, as his health was rapidly declining in that inclement climate; but he would not weaken the fleet by returning home in any of the large ships, contenting himself with a brig; and on his landing at Yarmouth, the first place he visited was the hospital, to see the brave wounded who had fought with him at Copenhagen.

A few weeks afterwards, on the apprehensions of invasion, he was appointed to command from Orfordness to Beachy Head. He attacked the French flotilla at Boulogne; but the peace of Amiens put a stop to further hostilities, and Nelson retired to an estate he had purchased at Merton, in Surrey. Here he was not allowed to remain long; for war being renewed, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean fleet. The French put to sea from Toulon; his lordship went in pursuit during a succession of severe gales, which compelled the enemy to return to port. In March 1805 they again sailed, and having formed a junction off Cadiz with the Spaniards (against whom war had also been declared), this formidable


fleet quitted the Mediterranean, designing to attack the British possessions in the West Indies. The combined fleet consisted of twenty sail-of-the-line, seven 44-gun frigates, one of 26 guns, three corvettes, and a brig. Nelson, when he at length was apprised of their course, unhesitatingly pursued with ten sail-of-the-line and three frigates. He followed them closely, sometimes deceived by false intelligence, and at others making himself assured of falling in with them; but it soon appeared that even the inferior force of Nelson was sufficient to deter the French admiral, for suddenly his course was altered, and he conducted his fleet back to Europe. Again Nelson pursued, and on the 19th July anchored at Gibraltar. The next day, he remarks in his diary: 'I went on shore for the first time since June 16, 1803, and from having my foot out of the *Victory*, two years wanting ten days;' in fact, from May 1803 to August 1805, he quitted his ship but three times, each time upon the king's service, and his absence never exceeded an hour.

At Gibraltar he obtained no news of the French. Once more he went in search of them, and after traversing the Bay of Biscay and other seas, on the 15th August he received orders to proceed with the *Victory* and *Superb* to Portsmouth. On his arrival at that place, he learned that the French fleet, consisting of twenty sail-of-the-line, three 50-gun ships, five frigates, and two brigs, had been attacked by Sir Robert Calder with fifteen sail-of-the-line, two frigates, a cutter, and a lugger, on the 22d July, sixty leagues west of Cape Finisterre, and two sail of the French line captured. The fleets remained in sight of each other till the 26th, when the French bore away for Vigo, where, having refitted, they proceeded to Ferrol, and taking another squadron from thence, succeeded in getting into Cadiz. For not doing

more, Sir Robert Calder was tried by court-martial, and adjudged to be severely reprimanded.

CHAPTER VI.

LAST GREAT VICTORY AND DEATH.

 NELSON again offered his services, and they were willingly accepted: he hoisted his flag in the *Victory*, and on the 29th September, his birthday, took his station off Cadiz, where a rigorous blockade was instituted to force the enemy to sea. From this period till the 19th October, Nelson daily took an opportunity of imparting to his captains the mode of attack he purposed to adopt, not merely for subduing, but annihilating the enemy; adding, 'If his signals could not be seen or clearly understood, no captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy.'

On the 19th, Villeneuve quitted Cadiz, and on the 21st, after some skilful manœuvring, he formed the combined fleet into a crescent, verging to leeward, every opening in his order of battle being filled up by a ship under the lee of the French. The number of the enemy was fifteen Spanish and eighteen French, making thirty-three ships-of-the-line. The English, with twenty-seven line-of-battle ships, bore down in two divisions, the van led by Nelson, the rear by Lord Collingwood, who, on account of the van steering more to the northward, was the first in action. Whilst running down, Nelson made his last celebrated telegraphic signal: 'England expects every man will do his duty,' which was received throughout the fleet with



Battle of Trafalgar.



a burst of acclamation, harmonising with the spirit which it breathed. 'Now,' said Nelson, 'I can do no more; we must trust to the Great Disposer of all events, and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty.'

It appears that this hero of a hundred fights was on the present occasion assured of victory, but at the same time under a presentiment that he himself should not survive. Fully believing that his last hour was at hand, he had gone into his cabin and written a prayer, as also a paper bequeathing to the care of his country the infamous woman who had been the only disgrace of his life. One of his captains found him calm, but exhibiting none of the exhilaration with which he had entered upon the battles of Aboukir and Copenhagen. It being known that there were select musketeers throughout the French ships, many of them Tyrolese, he was entreated to lay aside the frock-coat bearing his various decorations, as these might cause him to be singled out by some experienced marksman; but with a sort of infatuation he refused, saying: 'In honour I gained them, and in honour I will die with them.' With difficulty he was induced to consent that two other vessels should be allowed to go into action before his own; but he nevertheless pressed on, and thus rendered the concession practically unavailing, as the two vessels were thereby prevented from passing his own.

The *Victory*, while approaching the *Santissima Trinidad*—Nelson's old adversary at Cape St Vincent—was severely raked by the numerous guns of that vessel; fifty men were killed; and Nelson's secretary, Mr Scott, fell by his side. He was soon in the heat of battle, with the *Santissima Trinidad* and *Bucentaur* close on one side, and the *Redoubtable* equally close on the other, so that he

had occasion to fire from both sides. After the action had continued for about an hour, supposing that the *Redoubtable* had surrendered—for she was silenced, and bore no flag—he gave orders, with his usual humanity, to cease firing upon her. This order had been repeated more earnestly than before, when from that very vessel he received his death-wound. It was at about a quarter past one that a musket-ball from the rigging of the *Redoubtable* struck him on the left shoulder, carrying part of the lace of his epaulette into his body. He fell upon his face amidst the blood of his slain secretary. As a sergeant of marines and two seamen raised him up, he said to his captain: ‘They have done for me at last, Hardy.’

‘I hope not,’ replied Captain Hardy.

‘Yes,’ he rejoined, ‘my backbone is shot through.’

Yet he preserved so much presence of mind, that, while they were conveying him down, he gave an order about the tiller-ropes, which he observed to have been injured. He was laid on a mattress in the midshipmen’s berth. Mr (afterwards Sir William) Beatty, the surgeon, attended him, and ascertained by the symptoms that the wound was mortal, the ball having lodged in the spine; but the fact of his danger was concealed from the crew. Nelson knew that his end was approaching, and entreated his surgeon to leave him, and attend to those to whom he might be useful. Whilst lying in great agony, he heard the cheers of his people as each of the enemy struck, and a gleam of joy each time illumined his countenance. He issued his orders clearly and distinctly, and conversed affectionately with those around him, frequently thanking God most fervently that he had done his duty. When Hardy came down, he eagerly asked how the day was going. ‘Very well,’ said the captain; ‘ten of the enemy

have struck.' Returning rather less than an hour after, he took the hand of the dying admiral, and congratulated him on having gained a complete victory. He expressed



Death of Nelson.

gratification on learning that fourteen or fifteen of the enemy's vessels had surrendered, but remarked: 'I bargained for twenty.' He recommended Hardy immediately to anchor—an order which, had it been followed, might have made the victory over the enemy more complete. After having spoken some words to his chaplain, he breathed this sentence—and it was his last—'I thank God I have done my duty.' He expired at half-past four, three hours and a quarter after receiving the fatal wound.

Ultimately, the vessels taken reached the number required

by Nelson ; but, from the neglect of his order to anchor, a gale which came on dispersed and sunk several of them. Still, the battle of Trafalgar was a death-blow to the maritime power of France and Spain, and proved of incalculable service to England, counterpoising as it did the great land successes of Napoleon, by which it appeared as if our country must have otherwise been reduced in a few years to French domination. The victory was gained at great expense ; since, besides the irreparable loss of Nelson, there fell 23 officers, 15 petty officers, and 409 seamen and marines ; while 52 officers, 57 petty officers, and 1177 seamen and marines were wounded. The losses on the part of the enemy are scarcely calculable, but must have been several thousands, on account of the severe gales that followed the battle.

All that a grateful nation could bestow upon a dead hero was manifested towards the devoted Nelson. His remains were landed at Greenwich, and lay in gorgeous state three days. A public funeral, attended by most of the male members of the royal family, took place in St Paul's Cathedral. His brother was created Earl Nelson, with a grant of £6000 a year ; £10,000 was voted to each of his sisters, and £100,000 for the purchase of an estate. Statues and monuments have been erected to his memory ; but perhaps none is more characteristic of quiet after the storms of life than the tomb raised over his body in the crypt of St Paul's. It is a sarcophagus of black marble, which was originally prepared by order of Cardinal Wolsey for his own remains. . On the pedestal are the words, 'HORATIO, VISCOUNT NELSON.' His old friend Collingwood lies under an altar-tomb on one side of Nelson's ; and on the other is the body of the Earl of Northesk, another distinguished naval commander.

It is related that Nelson met Wellington but once, when Colonel Wellesley, at one of the government offices. Nelson had come to ask for the services of the rising soldier. Wellesley knew Nelson from the portraits of him: Nelson did not know Wellesley, but was so struck with his conversation, that he stepped out of the room to inquire whom he was.

The character of Nelson has been seen displayed in his actions. He was ardent and fearless in the line of his duty to an extraordinary extent. No labour or sacrifice which promised to make him better as a sailor and an officer seemed to him too great; no danger appalled him where he saw a reasonable chance of succeeding in an enterprise. There was in him a singular union of sagacity with these ardent qualities; and while unwilling to be too ready to admit difficulties, yet it was observed that he generally kept a steady eye at the same time to the means by which any of his objects were to be realised. The originality and genius of the man are fully shown in the number of remarkable expressions which he is remembered as using on particular occasions—his last signal being the chief. When we consider, in addition to these high qualities, his generous and magnanimous nature—his constant readiness to acknowledge merit in others—his invariable humanity—we must admit that few characters have exceeded that of Nelson in all desirable gifts. It clearly appears that these qualities, without any intrinsic aid whatever, bore our hero onward from the humblest rank in the service that a gentleman ever accepts, to the supreme command; and his life thus becomes a valuable illustration of a truth which cannot be too deeply impressed, that *good character and conduct form the true talisman of success.*



DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS—SERVICE IN INDIA.



OME doubt has been allowed to rest upon both the date and place of the birth of this illustrious man. He was born either in Merrion Street, Dublin, or at Dangan Castle, Meath, and according to his mother the date of his birth was the 1st of May 1769. His father, Garret, Earl of Mornington, was noted as an amateur

in musical composition, and some glees by him are still much admired. The mother was Anne, eldest daughter of Arthur, Viscount Dungannon. The Wellesleys, or, as they long entitled themselves, Wesleys, had been eminent in Ireland from the time of the first invasion under Henry II., whom their progenitor served as standard-bearer. But the family of the Duke of Wellington had only assumed this name on succeeding to the property of Garret Wesley of Dangan, who had married a collateral relation of the subject of this memoir. The original family name was Colley or Cowley, and the paternal ancestor of the illustrious Duke had come into Ireland as a lawyer in the reign of Henry VIII. Richard Colley, Esq., originally proprietor of Castle-Carbery, a moderate estate in King's County, and afterwards, by bequest, of the estate of the Wesleys in Meath, represented the borough of Trim in parliament, and in 1746 was ennobled as Baron Mornington—a title which his son exchanged in 1760 for an earldom. By birth and ancestral history, the Duke was thus connected with Ireland, although few of her sons have ever exhibited less affinity to the prevalent traits of the national character.

A startling and significant page in the world's history was opened, and its giant characters were partly traced, during the youth of the future field-marshal. The military power of Great Britain had been successfully withstood by the infant states of America; and the soldiers of despotic France, who had assisted in the vindication of the liberties of the British colonists, returned to their homes, were repeating to eagerly-attentive audiences the strange and thrilling words they had become familiar with in the far-off western world. Daily the fierce and angry murmur grew and strengthened, and it required little sagacity to

foresee that men of the sword must reap abundant harvests ere the new principles inaugurated by the rifle-volley of Bunker Hill, and so ominously echoed in the most powerful of the continental states of old Europe, should either become permanently triumphant, or be trampled out beneath the heels of the still vigorous though decaying feudalism against which they were so audaciously arrayed. Arthur Wellesley, with the full consent of his relatives, chose the army for a profession; Richard, his eldest brother, by his father's death Lord Mornington, and afterwards Marquis of Wellesley, decided for the civil service of the state; and both were at an early age removed from Eton—Richard to the university of Oxford, and Arthur to the military school of Angiers in France, then under the direction of the celebrated engineer, Pigneron. Napoleon Bonaparte was at the same time receiving instruction at the sister school of Brienne.

Arthur Wellesley returned to England soon after completing his seventeenth year. His elder brother, Richard, on attaining his majority was returned to parliament for the borough of Beer-Alston, a seat which he subsequently exchanged for that of the royal borough of Windsor. He early succeeded in obtaining place under Mr Pitt, and was appointed one of the commissioners for the affairs of India. Family influence and connection told rapidly also upon the advancement of the young soldier, who, gazetted ensign in the 73d Regiment on the 7th of March 1787, was on the 25th of December in the same year a lieutenant in the 76th. The following month he exchanged into the 41st. In 1790 he was returned to parliament for the borough of Trim, a portion of the Mornington estate. On the 30th of June 1791 he was promoted to a company in the 58th Foot, which, in the following year, he exchanged for a troop in

the 12th Dragoons. On the 30th of April 1793 he was gazetted major of the 33d, and on the 30th of September following he was appointed lieutenant-colonel of the same regiment; having in little more than five years passed through the various grades from that of an ensign to a lieutenant-colonelcy, and the actual command of a veteran regiment.

The young lieutenant-colonel had not greatly distinguished himself in the House of Commons. He spoke seldom, and then merely to give confused and ineffective utterance to the family-borough politics, the main points of which, like others originating in the same sources, appeared to be the continued peremptory exclusion of Catholics from the privileges of citizens, and the advancement of the personal interests of the Trim proprietary. But the curtain was about to rise on a fitter theatre for the development of Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley's genius than the House of Commons. The sullen murmurs of which we spoke just now had by this time broken into a tumultuous roar of hate and indignation. The king and queen of France, and those of the nobility and clergy who were bold enough to confront the hurricane of rage that had burst forth, all perished miserably. Public feeling in England, artfully and eloquently stimulated, rose quickly to fever-heat, and amidst the frantic applause of almost the entire nation Mr Pitt declared war to the death against the French Republic. A British army was not long afterwards despatched to Flanders under the command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York—a general and bishop by virtue of his royal birth alone, and about as well fitted to direct the operations of an army as to fill the episcopal chair of Osnaburg. In 1794 reinforcements were despatched, rather with a view to enable the prince-general

to retreat in tolerable order and safety, than with any reasonable hope of arresting the triumphant progress of the French armies. Amongst others the 33d Regiment was ordered to embark, and marched to Cork for that purpose.

The troops arrived at their destination in time to learn that the Duke of York had been already driven into Holland, and that an immediate re-embarkation was necessary in order to reach Antwerp by the Scheldt. This was effected; and in the following January (1795), Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley, as senior officer, commanded three battalions in the retreat through Holland, and early in the spring embarked with the troops at Bremen for England.

The superiority of Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley as a regimental officer was clearly manifested by the celerity with which the 33d, which had greatly suffered, was reorganised and reported fit for service. It joined the camp near Southampton, and in October 1795 was embarked in the fleet destined for the West Indies, under the command of Admiral Christian. Baffling storm and tempest, against which they vainly struggled for six weeks, drove them back, and the destination of the 33d was afterwards changed to India, for which country the regiment sailed in April 1796, arriving at Bengal in September, accompanied by Colonel Wellesley, who had joined it at the Cape of Good Hope in June, illness having prevented him from taking his departure with it from England.

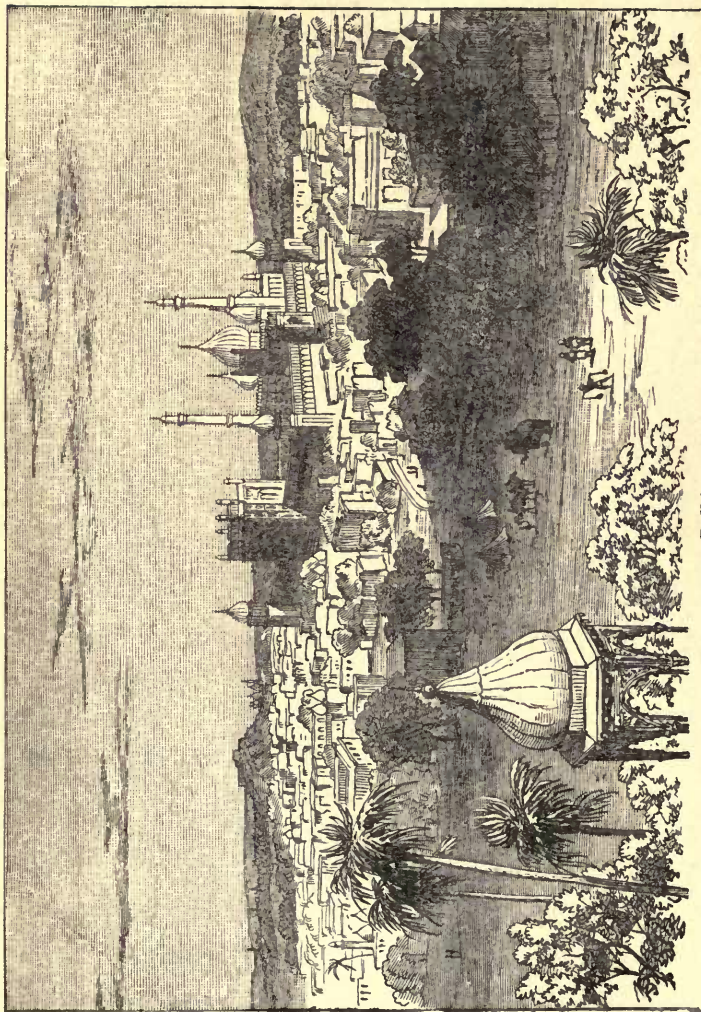
Nothing requiring remark occurred till 1798, when Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley's regiment was attached to the Madras establishment, where preparations for a manifestly inevitable conflict with Tippoo Saib, the ruler of

the Mysore territory, were, under the direction of the new governor-general, in course of rapid progress. The new governor-general was Colonel Wellesley's elder brother, Lord Mornington, who had succeeded Sir John Shore in that high and responsible office. Never perhaps had the government of British India been assumed under graver circumstances. The storm raging in Europe had given life and energy to the temporarily subdued or overawed native princes and potentates, to whom the increasing power of the English was obnoxious, either from the memory of past defeats, or apprehension that the signal chastisement already inflicted upon some of their number might ultimately reach all. French officers abounded in the armies of the native princes, especially in those of the Mahratta chiefs Dowlut, Rao Sindhia, and Holkar, of the Nizam, and of Tippoo Saib. Those officers naturally availed themselves of their position to excite the princes of India against the nation that had driven the French out of the country, and which was now at war with the French Republic; and there was unfortunately no lack of inflammable materials for the fire, which they nothing doubted of being able to kindle into a tempest of flame that would wither up and consume every vestige of British rule in the Indian Peninsula. Above all, Tippoo Saib, the son of Hyder Ali, and a fanatic Mussulman, nourished the fiercest hatred of the power that, by the treaty dictated by Cornwallis in 1792, had stripped him of half his territories, treasure to an immense amount, 800 pieces of cannon, and carried off two of his sons as hostages for the due fulfilment of his engagements.

The agents of the French republic fed his hopes of vengeance by the most lavish promises of support, and Tippoo listened, fatally for himself, to assurances of aid

which Nelson's victory of the Nile, and the prompt, decisive measures of the governor-general, prevented the French, however sincere may have been their intentions, from redeeming. Tippoo not only greatly caressed the officers of that nation, whom he permitted to form a Jacobin club at Seringapatam, in which war was proclaimed against all kings, except of course Tippoo himself, but made earnest overtures to the great Mahratta chiefs, to induce them to join in his purposed invasion of the Carnatic. His proposals were favourably received, but the indolent, procrastinating habits of Asiatic rulers were no match for the virile energy of the new governor-general, and long before any effectual combination could be realised, the capital of Tippoo was in the hands of the English, and himself deprived of life as well as empire. In order that our readers should thoroughly comprehend the full extent of the peril from which the Marquis of Wellesley, one of the ablest proconsuls this country ever sent forth, saved the mighty interests confided to him, it is necessary to direct their attention for a brief space to the map of the Indian Peninsula.

The three presidential cities, they will perceive, of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, are so situated that lines drawn from one to the other would intersect the large portion of territory south of the Nerbudda River, forming the centre of the peninsula; but these presidencies, admirably situated as strategic points, were but as dots and fringes along the eastern and western coasts, compared with the extent of the vast country which, from north to south, from Delhi to the Toombudra River, measures 1000 miles, and in width from the Bay of Bengal to the Gulf of Candy, 900 miles, gradually diminishing to its southern extremity. The country north of the Nerbudda is Hindu-



Delhi.

stan proper; between the Nerbudda and the Kistna are Poona, the dominions of the Nizam, and Berar; and south of the Kistna, the Deccan, Mysore, and the Carnatic—Madras and the Carnatic lying to the east of Seringapatam and the Mysore country. All that immense territory, with the exception of the Mysore and the Nizam's dominions, and of course the British provinces, were nominally under the government of the Rajah of Sattara, but really, so far as any actual power existed, under that of the Peshwa—a hereditary minister, who ruled in the rajah's name at Poona, a city not far distant from Bombay.

The aggregate army of this power amounted to 300,000 men, and if directed by one single will in fact, as it was in theory, would have been extremely formidable. This, however, was far from being the case, the Mahratta territories nominally under the Peshwa's rule being divided into five military jurisdictions, each governed by a rajah. Of these chieftains, Sindhia and Holkar, whose territories were in the Malwa country, north of the Nerbudda, were the most powerful, and, as well as the less potent Rajah of Berar, determined, though not as yet open enemies of the intrusive English. Sindhia had greatly strengthened himself by his conquests in the north as far as Delhi, and by his influence at Poona, where he in effect held the Peshwa in subjection. Of Sindhia's army, 40,000 infantry, 9000 cavalry, and 150 pieces of artillery had been organised and disciplined by M. De Boigne, a native of Savoy in France, who entered Sindhia's service in 1784. He was succeeded by M. Perron, who at this time commanded at Delhi and the northern provinces. Two-thirds of the officers of the army thus disciplined were Frenchmen or other Europeans. Holkar, a rival Mahratta chief, in order to strengthen himself against the growing power of Sindhia, had also engaged

great numbers of French officers, and his numerous army was also in a high state of efficiency.

Menaced by such formidable neighbours, who, although jealous of each other, were well disposed to combine against their common enemy the English, it behoved the governor-general to be prompt and decided if he would avert or dissipate the tempest rapidly gathering around him. He *was* swift and deadly. War was declared against Tippoo Saib, and an admirably-appointed army of 80,000 men, previously assembled at Bellore, marched upon Seringapatam on the 10th March 1799, under General Harris. With the army of the Carnatic moved the Nizam's contingent, to which the 33d European Regiment had been attached under the command of Colonel Wellesley. This force operated on the right, and was somewhat harassed during the march by the sultan's troops. At Mallavelly Tippoo drew up in position, and offered hesitating battle to Wellesley's force, which, reinforced by some squadrons of horse under Sir John Floyd, the father-in-law of Sir Robert Peel, overthrew him with slight loss to themselves; and the troops continuing their rapid march, arrived with the bulk of the army on the 3d of April before Seringapatam—an irregularly but strongly fortified city, situated on an island formed by the confluence of the Kaveri and Coleroon. The Kaveri was passed, active operations against the sultan's capital commenced at once, and were urged forward with untiring energy and zeal. On the night of the 5th of April, Colonel Wellesley was directed to attack the Sultaun-pettah Tope, a kind of copse or grove intersected with water-courses and ruined habitations, from which the troops were frequently assailed by rockets. The 33d and two native Bengal regiments were ordered on this service. The night was extremely dark; Colonel

Wellesley and his troops lost their way, and after many vain efforts to remedy the mischance, it was found necessary to withdraw the men ; but this was not done, unfortunately, till after twelve grenadiers of the 33d had been cut off and carried into Seringapatam, where they were savagely murdered by Tippoo's order.

Colonel Wellesley, separated from his soldiers, wandered blindly about in the thick darkness till nearly twelve o'clock, when he recovered the track, and as soon as possible presented himself before General Harris in a state of great agitation, to announce that the attack had failed. This is the plain, unvarnished history of an affair which the decriers of the Duke's military reputation have magnified into a disgraceful defeat ; attended with we know not what inglorious circumstance, involving want of discretion, presence of mind, and even personal bravery. Such imputations are simply ridiculous, and but for the Duke's subsequent dazzling career, in which an action less brilliant than the rest shows like a shadow or a stain, would, we may be sure, never have been heard of. Sir David Baird, who scoured another tope with cavalry on the same night, also lost his way on returning. It was, in fact, one of those misfortunes which neither prudence nor skill nor daring can at times prevent, and is only one amongst scores of instances of the risks that must ever attend night-attacks, especially in tangled and broken localities with which neither officers nor soldiers are acquainted. The next day the attempt was renewed by Colonel Wellesley, the attacking force being increased by the 94th Scotch Regiment. It was completely successful, and Tippoo Saib began to feel some misgivings that his frequently-repeated boastful exclamation—'Who can take Seringapatam?'—might receive a fatal solution. He wrote to General Harris, suggest-

ing a negotiation. The reply was decisive: half his territory to be ceded, the expenses of the war to be paid in full, and hostages given for the performance of those hard conditions. There could be no parleying or negotiation. The fanatic sovereign of Mysore turned sullenly away from such ruinous terms of peace, and continued the defence.

Daily, hourly, the walls of the devoted city crumbled beneath the thunder-strokes of the English batteries, and at noon on the 4th of May the glittering ranks of the troops destined for the assault were seen from Seringapatam, drawn up in two columns, and waiting only for the signal that should loose them on their quarry. It was speedily given; and led by Sir David Baird, who had volunteered for the service, the assaulting columns, preceded by their respective forlorn-hopes, advanced swiftly against the breach. The reserve in the trenches was commanded by Colonel Wellesley. The preparations for the decisive struggle, visible from the walls, had been duly reported to Tippoo, who received the intelligence with a smile of disdainful unbelief in the possibility of an assault upon the impregnable city in broad daylight. He was sitting, on this the last hour of his life, still obstinately incredulous as to the reality of the attack, with some members of his family in the open air, under a kind of penthouse, when messengers, whose tidings were terribly confirmed by the increasing din and uproar of the assault, announced with quivering lips that the storming of the city had not only begun in earnest, but was already partially successful.

Tippoo, at length convinced, calmly arose, finished his religious exercises, and then hastened to the scene of conflict. It was all too true. The city, on his arrival, was substantially won; and after a brief struggle, Tippoo,

mounted on horseback, was borne away by a crowd of panic-stricken soldiers, who, hotly pursued, endeavoured to escape by the covered gateway leading to the interior of the city. The sultan strove to force his way through the dense mass of fugitives; but in that terrible hour his once all-potent menaces had lost their influence: the living barrier before him could not be passed, whilst nearer and nearer behind him flashed and thundered the fatal volleys of his pursuers. Presently his horse was shot, and with difficulty his faithful attendants raised and placed him in a palanquin. His foes were soon at hand-grip with him. A soldier made a furious grasp at a glittering jewel in his turban—the hallowed turban, dipped in the sacred waters of the Zem-Zem: Tippoo struck feebly at the man with his scimitar, inflicting a slight wound, and the infuriated soldier the next instant sent a bullet through his head. His attendants were next despatched, and in a few minutes sultan, servants, palanquin were hidden beneath a heap of dead, pitilessly sacrificed by troops whose vengeful passions had been kindled to fury by the too authentic stories related of Tippoo's cruelties towards the British prisoners that had fallen into his hands.

Effective resistance was at an end; but those alone who have witnessed the revolting spectacle of a crowded city in the power of a soldiery, drunk with the triumph of a desperate and sanguinary assault, can realise the confusion, uproar, terror that accompanied the entrance of the victorious troops into Seringapatam, and which continued not only during the afternoon, but through the night, and far into the next day. So universal at first was the disorder, that the officers could not for some time prevent the men from plundering the sultan's treasury; and before an efficient guard could be marched in from the reserve by

Colonel Wellesley, an immense booty was carried off. This important service effected, inquiries were made for Tippoo, and an active search set on foot to discover him. He could not be found, and it began to be feared that he had escaped, when word was brought that he was supposed to have fallen in the covered gateway. This was a fact of too great importance to be left in doubt, and Sir David Baird with Colonel Wellesley immediately proceeded to ascertain the truth of the report with their own eyes. By the time they arrived at the indicated spot darkness had fallen; but torches being procured, the bodies of the slain were removed under the immediate inspection of the two officers. As the frightful heap diminished, first Tippoo's palanquin, then his attendants, were disinterred, and immediately beneath them the corpse of the sultan presented itself. The features of Tippoo were serene and composed as if he slept; so completely so indeed, that it was for a moment thought he was merely feigning death. To satisfy himself, Colonel Wellesley stepped close to the body, placed his hand upon the pulse and then upon the heart. 'He is dead fast enough,' was the remark; and orders were immediately given to convey the corpse to the habitation of the family of the deceased ruler, over which a strong protective guard had been placed.

St George's flag waved proudly in the morning sunlight from the towers of the captured city, from which there still went up to heaven the shouts and din and curses of unbridled violence and outrage. It was full time to quell the disorder, and with this view Colonel Wellesley was appointed commandant and governor of Seringapatam. He set to work at once, and vigorously, as the following brief extracts from letters hurriedly despatched to General Harris during the day amply testify:

10 A.M., 5th May.

MY DEAR SIR—We are in such confusion that I recommend it to you not to come in till to-morrow, or at soonest late this evening.

Half-past Twelve.—I wish you would send the provost here and put him under my orders. Until some of the plunderers are hanged, it is vain to expect to stop the plunder.

Two o'clock P.M.—Things are better than they were, but they are still very bad ; and until the provost executes three or four people, it is impossible to expect order or indeed safety.


The provost was granted ; four of the plunderers were caught red-handed, briefly doomed, and hanged without loss of time. This is not pleasant reading, for even the justice of war shocks one as a frightful cruelty ; but the severity appears to have been imperatively necessary, and it certainly answered its purpose, inasmuch as Colonel Wellesley was enabled on the next day to write as follows :

May 6.—Plunder is stopped. The fires are all extinguished, and the inhabitants are returning to their homes fast. I am now burying the dead, which I hope will be completed to-day, particularly if you send me all the pioneers.

Some idea of the value of the plunder carried off by the soldiery may be drawn from the well-attested fact, that some diamonds purchased of a private by Dr Mein for a trifle were afterwards sold for £32,000 sterling. With all such drawbacks, however, upon the amount of valuables officially captured, the victorious general carried off treasure to the enormous amount, as set down in the returns, of 45,580,350 star pagodas !

CHAPTER II.

THE MAHRATTA WAR.

HE war, as far as the Mysore country was concerned, was now over; and the bulk of the army retraced its steps, after the youthful grandson of the ruler whom Hyder Ali had deposed had been restored to the rajahship of Mysore, in accordance with British-Indian policy. The restored rajah was of course for the future merely the puppet-monarch of a diminished territory, really as much governed by the Company's officers as that portion of the Mysore over which they ostensibly ruled.

Colonel Wellesley was appointed civil and military governor of Seringapatam and Mysore, and in that dual capacity is admitted to have displayed administrative talents of a high order. However deaf and stern to the pleadings for mercy towards proved offenders against the rigours of positive law, this great soldier may have shown himself throughout his remarkable career—a peculiarity of character which may perhaps account for the indisputable fact, that whilst he extorted the respect and confidence of the troops under his command, accustoming them as he did to look upon the day of battle as one of assured victory, he was never regarded by his soldiers with personal affection, much less enthusiasm, like that, for instance, which Nelson inspired—still it cannot be denied that he ever held the balance of his iron justice fairly between the highest and the lowest.

The oppressed coolies were bewildered and surprised to

find the mighty governor of Mysore insisting that despised outcasts such as they should receive equitable treatment at the hands of the exalted and magnificent persons that British officers in India are held to be.

Colonel Wellesley's command in the Mysore continued, with only one temporary interruption, till he left India. In 1801 he left Seringapatam for Trincomalee, where a force of 3000 men was assembled to act against the Mauritius; but the duplicate copy of an overland despatch to the governor-general, commanding him to detach the same number of men to Egypt, having been placed in Colonel Wellesley's hands by Mr Dundas, he immediately determined on sailing with the troops to Bombay, in order that they should be ready to start at once for Egypt. This decision was approved of by the governor-general, and Sir David Baird being appointed to command the expedition, Colonel Wellesley was attached to the force as second to that general. An attack of fever, by which he was for a time prostrated, prevented him from accompanying the troops, and on his recovery he was restored to his command in the Mysore territory.

The first considerable interruption to his energetic administration of affairs was caused by the incursions of Dhondia Waugh, a Mahratta trooper, who at the fall of Seringapatam had been liberated from one of its dungeons. He was a dashing, daring adventurer, and by his success as a highwayman and freebooter soon gathered round him a great number of desperate vagabonds, eager to join in the same gainful trade. So rapidly did his followers increase, that he was soon at the head of a large, and, so far as numbers went, a powerful army. His self-estimation grew even faster than his apparent power, and he assumed the magnificent title of 'King of

the Two Worlds.' This great monarch, after receiving several checks from detachments of the British forces, was, unfortunately for himself, come up with at Corraehgill on the 10th September 1800 by Colonel Wellesley, after a forced and rapid march with the 19th, 25th, and 22d Light Dragoons, and the 1st and 2d Regiments of native cavalry. The attack was instantaneous, and the rout total, the King of the Two Worlds being himself amongst the slain. An anecdote is related of Colonel Wellesley in connection with the extinction of this freebooter which does him honour. One of the captives was the favourite son of Dhondia—a beautiful boy, called Sulabuth Khan—and Colonel Wellesley, commiserating his forlorn state, took him under his especial protection, had him properly educated, and ultimately procured him employment in the service of the Rajah of Mysore, which he retained till his death by cholera in 1822.

The Mahratta chiefs, Sindhia and Holkar, instead of vigorously assisting Tippoo in his extremity, had got up a war between themselves; and in October 1802 Holkar defeated the combined forces of Sindhia and the Peshwa, and seated a puppet of his own on the throne. The Peshwa, previous to leaving Poona after his defeat, applied to the Company's resident for help and protection. The application, on reference to the governor-general, was favourably entertained; a treaty of alliance was entered into with the expelled Peshwa; and it was determined to put down not only Holkar, who, in the elation of his triumph over the Peshwa, menaced the Nizam's dominions with invasion, but Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar. A force sufficient for the purpose was assembled at Hurryhur, and placed under the command of Major-general Wellesley. This rank the governor-general had conferred upon his

brother on the 2d of April 1802. We have previously given the dates of the unearned military grades conferred upon the Duke of Wellington, and it may be as well now to set down those for which he was indebted, not to the accident of birth and family connection, but to his great services. His commission of colonel was conferred on the 3d of May 1796; that of major-general, 2d of April 1802; of lieutenant-general, 25th April 1808; of general in Spain and Portugal, 31st July 1811; of field-marshal, 21st June 1813.

We have space only for a glance at General Wellesley's chief exploits during this Mahratta war, as it is called. The army, consisting of about 20,000 troops of all arms, moved from Hurryhur on the 9th of March 1803, and without encountering any serious opposition arrived at Poona on the 20th of April. On the 13th of May the Peshwa was replaced on the throne. Supreme civil and military authority in the territories of the Nizam, the Peshwa, and the Mahratta States was soon afterwards conferred on General Wellesley, and on the 6th of August he took the field against Sindhia and his allies. Petta, a native town, garrisoned by 3000 Mahratta troops and 1500 Arab mercenaries, was, without stopping to breach the wall, stormed by the help of a few scaling-ladders and the loss of only 140 men. Gockla, a Mahratta chief, wrote the following account of this affair to his friends at Poona: 'These English are a strange people, and their general is a wonderful man. They came here in the morning, looked at the Petta wall, walked over it, killed all the garrison, and returned to breakfast. What can withstand them?' The strong fortress of Ahmednagar was next attacked, and compelled to surrender. There was a palace in the interior which contained an immense

quantity of valuables, and of so tempting a kind that the general was compelled to hang two native soldiers in the gateway before he could quietly secure the booty for distribution in the proper way.

The fort of Broach shared the fate of Ahmednagar little more than a fortnight afterwards, and so successful were General Wellesley's operations, that if a good blow could be struck at Sindhia's army—reputed to be extremely formidable, not only from its numbers but the excellent discipline of the infantry, and its powerful, well-organised artillery—the Mahratta difficulty in that part of the peninsula at least might be considered terminated. To effect this desirable object no effort was spared, and on the 22d of September the hurkarus or scouts brought intelligence that the army of Sindhia was posted at Bokerdun, no very great distance off. General Wellesley immediately divided his army into two divisions, one of which he placed under the command of Colonel Stevenson, with directions to make a detour to the west, in order to avoid passing through a narrow and dangerous defile; whilst he himself took the more direct easterly route. Stevenson was to rejoin him late in the evening of the 23d. Early in the morning of that day General Wellesley was informed by the hurkarus that Sindhia's cavalry had gone off, but that the infantry still remained at Bokerdun. Wellesley put himself in motion instantly, leaving his baggage behind under a sufficient guard, and after a sultry, hurried march, found himself about noon suddenly in the presence of an army of 50,000 men, of which full 30,000 were cavalry, drawn up between the rivers Juah and Kaitna, the village of Assaye on the Juah being nearly in the centre of the line! The hurkarus had either wilfully or ignorantly deceived him.

As this terrible battle elicited the first unmistakable proof that General Wellesley possessed those rare and indispensable attributes of a great commander—the eagle sweep which takes in at a glance all the essential points of the situation, however terrible it may be, or however suddenly presented, and the prompt sagacity and daring that at once decides upon and executes the fittest means of overcoming the threatened danger—a somewhat detailed account of the unequal conflict may be desirable.

The Mahratta forces were, as we have said, drawn up between the rivers Juah and Kaitna: which streams, gradually approaching each other, met on their left. In this narrow part of the peninsula, as we may call the ground thus marked by the confluence of the two rivers, the infantry, a disciplined body of about 12,000 men, were posted; in the centre 100 guns fully manned were ranged; and on the right, in the broader and still widening space leading up to Bokerdun, upwards of 30,000 well-mounted horsemen, glittering in all the rainbow splendour of Eastern costume, were encamped—their apparently innumerable and various-coloured tents presenting all the life and bustle of a town, with jewellers, smiths, and other trades, pursuing their vocations as if within the walls of a peaceful and crowded city. The British force, amounting to no more than 8700 sabres and bayonets, with seventeen guns, arrived directly in front of this numerous and formidable cavalry, the river Kaitna running along their front till its junction with the Juah.

It was a startling as well as magnificent spectacle, and so apparently desperate were the odds that General Wellesley has been frequently blamed by rule-and-line tacticians for hazarding a battle in which he had, according to them, no right to expect success. He should have

retired, say they, and declined a battle till Stevenson had joined. Such reasoners appear to forget that there is a relative force and weakness of armies that cannot be estimated by merely counting their proportionate numbers. Above the colours of the English battalions there floated a halo which, however boldly the Mahratta soldiers might carry it, disquieted them more than would thrice the number of men, however brave and disciplined, who lacked it. The crash of the falling towers of Seringapatam, the swift destruction that had overtaken the King of the Two Worlds, the storming of Petta, the capture of the strongholds of Ahmednagar and Broach, must have been vividly present to the imaginations of those impressionable children of the East, exciting dread and apprehension which no array of cannon or of numbers on their own side could diminish, much less dissipate. To display fear or hesitation would be to throw away that mighty moral force; to retreat, to turn back before that numerous cavalry, would be ruin!

Whatever General Wellesley felt on finding himself unexpectedly before so imposing an array, no look or word betrayed the slightest surprise or dismay. A few minutes decided his plan of attack, which was as vigorously executed as it was ably conceived. The troops wheeled off quickly to the right, towards the confluence of the two rivers, and passing the ford of Peepulgaon, near the extremity of the narrowing peninsula, turned the left of the Mahratta force, compelling the infantry that composed it to change their front, and draw up in several lines *across* the peninsula, their right resting on the Kaitna, and their left on a nullah or stream which flowed parallel with the Kaitna, on the Juah side, by Assaye. By this change of position it is evident the Mahratta

cavalry could not fairly operate till their infantry and artillery, now between them and the British force, were either beaten or victorious. A furious battle at once commenced; but it was soon found that the seventeen field-pieces possessed by the British could make no effectual reply to the numerous and well-served guns of the enemy, and General Wellesley commanded an attack by the bayonet along the entire front. A loud cheer greeted the welcome and decisive order; an advancing line of levelled steel glittered through the driving cannon-smoke; and with a fierce and rapid step the British soldiers closed upon their numerous foes. They were not waited for: the Mahratta infantry fired a feeble, ineffective volley, then broke and fled; the British left, which General Wellesley led in person, pursuing them with terrible slaughter, and capturing all their guns. The British right, composed of the 74th Regiment and some pickets, were equally successful in the charge; but in following it up, the officer in command, instead of taking a more sheltered circuitous course towards Assaye, led his men across level ground, which the Mahratta artillery swept like a glacié, and the men fell by dozens. Seeing this, an immense body of Mahratta horse crept round by Assaye, and fell upon the staggering English infantry. At this crisis of the battle, Colonel Maxwell was ordered to charge with the 19th Dragoons and a sepoy cavalry regiment. He did so valiantly, swept through, over, the Mahratta horse, cut down as he passed the gunners at their pieces, and broke through Sindhia's left with irresistible fury, utterly routing it. This gallant charge, successful as it was, was an exhausting one; and a cloud of Mahratta cavalry, which, drawn up on an eminence, had as yet only overlooked the battle, now joined in it, rallying, as they came on, the

dispersed artillerymen and broken infantry. This movement the British general had foreseen and prepared for. The 78th Regiment and one of native horse had been held in reserve, and these, with the survivors of the 74th, vehemently charged the but as yet half-beaten Mahratta forces: Maxwell's brigade, who had in the meantime breathed their horses, joined in the fierce onslaught, and in a few minutes Sindhia's army, horse and foot, was a mass of panic-stricken fugitives, abandoning and throwing away in their headlong flight cannon, tents, arms, and stores, after losing in slain and wounded men and prisoners nearly twice the number of their assailants.

The victory was a splendid one, but it was dearly purchased. The British loss in killed and wounded amounted to 1584 men, according to the official lists; and amongst the former was the gallant Colonel Maxwell, who was slain in the pursuit. General Wellesley had two horses shot under him: 'one of them,' he wrote the next day, 'was Diomed, Colonel Aston's horse.' The loss fell, as usual in Indian battles, in much the greatest proportion upon the British part of the attacking force. The 74th especially suffered severely, and a picket that went into action with one officer and 150 men, mustered after the battle only four rank-and-file!

The Mahratta chiefs never recovered this heavy blow, followed as it was by the less remarkable, though quite as decisive victory of Argaum and the capture of Asurgarh and Gawilgarh. They sued for peace, and Lord Lake having been quite as successful in the northern provinces and at Delhi against M. Perron, terms dictated by the conquerors were agreed upon, and on the 30th of December 1803 the Mahratta war terminated.

The work of General Wellesley in India was now accom-

plished, and he was anxious to return to Europe, where no soldier had yet appeared capable of measuring himself against the marshals of France, who, with their redoubted chief, had not only inspired the Continent with a panic-terror of their arms, but were again threatening a descent upon England. He embarked for Europe on the 10th of March 1805 in the *Trident* frigate, after having received from the officers of the army he had commanded, the merchants of Calcutta, and the native inhabitants of Seringapatam, highly gratifying and substantial tokens of admiration and esteem. The officers of the army subscribed for a gold vase, to be inscribed with the name of his great victory, Assaye—this was subsequently changed to a service of plate: the merchants of Calcutta presented him with a sword valued at a thousand guineas; and—a far more honouring tribute than these—the native people of Seringapatam presented him with an address, containing a prayer ‘to the God of all castes and colours,’ to bless and reward him for his just and equal rule in the Mysore. He had been previously, on the 1st September 1804, created a Knight-Companion of the Bath, and was consequently now Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.C.B.

CHAPTER III.

SERVICE IN THE PENINSULA.



HE cannon of Trafalgar awoke Napoleon from his day-dream of a successful invasion of England; and the British ministry, relieved from the idea of a French army advancing upon London, that had so long haunted them, despatched Earl Cathcart and General Don

with a British force to Northern Germany, to assist in the confidently-predicted march to Paris of the now allied Austrian and Russian armies. The recently-arrived young 'general of sepoys'—as the scribes of the *Moniteur*, not yet knowing him quite so well as in after years, sneeringly called Sir Arthur Wellesley—was ordered to join them there. By the time he arrived Lord Cathcart had received intelligence of the battle of Austerlitz, and the detachment against him of Augereau with 40,000 men of the Grand Army. The earl's first thought on receiving this news was of the transport-ships, and his next to summon a council of war, to decide upon embarking. It was of course attended by Major-general Wellesley, who was the youngest general officer present. The elders of the council were unanimous in their opinion of the desirableness of getting back to England as speedily as possible, although of course for different, but all equally cogent reasons.

The sole dissentient was Sir Arthur Wellesley. He was of opinion that a heavy blow might be struck through Augereau at the superstition of French invincibility which prevailed throughout the Continent, that would go far to rekindle the hopes extinguished in the blood of Austerlitz. 'Say,' argued the young general—'say that Augereau has forty thousand men : they will be greatly diminished before he can reach us by his hurried march through a wasted and unfriendly country. And even if otherwise, strongly posted and abundantly supplied as we are, we ought to beat him. A victory might have immense results, and a defeat would not be ruinous, as we could always embark under cover of the shipping. That is a sure and ought to be a last resource.' The seniors listened to the inexperienced soldier with elevated eyebrows and good-natured superiority. He might know how to win such battles as Assaye, but what

was that to encountering such terrible fellows as Augereau and 40,000 men of 'the Grand Army!' The rash advice was spurned, and Wellesley, with a cold disdainful smile playing about his keen gray eyes and thin compressed lips, left the council, and soon afterwards was again in England.

On the 10th of April 1806 Sir Arthur Wellesley married the Honourable Catherine Pakenham, third daughter of Edward Michael, second Lord Longford. By this marriage he had issue two sons: Arthur, born 3d of February 1807, at Harley Street, London; and Charles, born 16th January 1808, at the Secretary's Lodge, near Dublin.

In 1806 Sir Arthur was returned to parliament for the borough of Rye, and on the 3d of April 1807 he accepted the office of chief-secretary for Ireland; with the express understanding, however, with the minister, that his secretaryship should not stand in the way of his military employment should occasion require his services. His administration of Irish affairs was characterised by an unbending harshness, that rendered him very unpopular there—for which probably he did not care one straw. He was the author of the famous Insurrection Act, which, amongst other pleasant provisions, enacted that any Irishman found out of his house after sundown in the proclaimed districts should be liable to transportation. Sir Arthur organised a police for Dublin, and in this is said to have rendered good service to the Irish metropolis. But work for which he was much better fitted was again preparing for him.

The Austro-Russian combination ended by Austerlitz and the treaty of Tilsit instead of the march to Paris and the dethronement of the French emperor; and after some scandalous transactions between Napoleon and Alexander,

by which, for the sake of a Russian alliance against Great Britain, the ruler of France agreed to transfer Wallachia and Moldavia to the northern potentate, with a half promise to throw in Constantinople over the bargain at some future day, the two emperors solemnly and magnanimously offered peace to England—a peace to be based upon the principle that each power should retain all it had acquired during the war. France, her continental acquisitions, including Spain, which Bonaparte, by shameless perfidy and force, had just taken military possession of; Russia, the two principalities we have mentioned; and England, the sugar islands—colonies, even Malta, once so vehemently refused by Napoleon, that she had wrested from France, Spain, and Holland. This proposal, made with great form and circumstance, was substantially repelled at once, the British government in their reply refusing to treat without their allies, including the Spanish insurgents, as the czar and the emperor styled the outraged and indignant Spanish nation.

Prosperity must have weakened Napoleon's ordinary observation, if it be true, as M. Thiers intimates, that he believed his new alliance would terrify this country into the abandonment of Spain and Turkey, and the acceptance of an unstable, futile peace. The Crown-Prince of Denmark, who had been for some time coquetting with Bonaparte, and who was known to be extremely anxious to retain his continental possessions—had a numerous fleet at Copenhagen, that, if added to the French navy, might have redressed the catastrophe of Trafalgar, and this was therefore for England a veritable danger. Under these circumstances the British ministry determined on sending a naval and military expedition to the Danish capital, to enforce the surrender of the fleet to England, in trust, till the conclusion of a general peace.

We shall not attempt to defend the much-controverted morality of this enterprise : indeed the morality of the most approved war-tactics is, if it exist at all, of so subtle and fugitive a nature, that, if willing, we should be quite unable to say what is or what is not in harmony with it ; but this at least is certain, that subsequent disclosures proved irrefragably that if the Danish fleet had not been forcibly taken possession of by the English, it would have been handed over to Napoleon. But whatever the justice or expediency of the project, its execution was complete and masterly. The military force was nominally under the orders of Earl Cathcart, but Sir Arthur Wellesley, second in command, was virtually the leader of the expedition ; and he, by the vigour and rapidity of his operations, left little else for the naval commander, Admiral Gambier, to do than to escort the surrendered fleet safely home. Immediately on the arrival of the troops in the Isle of Zealand, the brief campaign commenced. The Danish forces offered a brave opposition at Kiöge ; but they were pushed aside, or driven headlong upon Copenhagen, with the loss of 1100 prisoners, including sixty officers and ten pieces of cannon. The cannonade and bombardment of the Danish capital followed quickly afterwards : it was in flames on the 4th, and on the 5th of September 1808, just as the storming forces were about to attack the breach, the Crown-Prince capitulated. The Danish fleet, consisting of sixteen sail of the line, nine frigates, fourteen sloops, with an immense quantity of naval stores, was given up to the British admiral, and conveyed to England. Two ships on the stocks were also taken to pieces and carried away, and two others were burnt. The operations were throughout conducted by Sir Arthur Wellesley—the Earl Cathcart, much to his credit for good sense, having confined

himself to receiving and perusing the despatches to headquarters of his skilful and audacious second in command. For this service Sir Arthur, and of course Earl Cathcart and Admiral Gambier, received the thanks of the crown and parliament.

The desperate though badly organised and unsuccessful resistance of the insurgent Spanish people to the infamous seizure of their country by Bonaparte, and the occupation of Lisbon by Marshal Junot, Duke of Abrantès, induced the British government to send an auxiliary army to the Peninsula, and the command of the troops assembled at Cork for that purpose was given to Sir Arthur Wellesley. The ardent general arrived at Corunna on the 20th of July 1808, and was there informed by the vapouring junta that Spain had plenty of soldiers: she only wanted money. They added that the British army could not be better employed than in clearing Portugal of the French force under Junot. The unaccountable surrender of Dupont at Baylen had in fact turned the brains of the juntas throughout Spain, and it required many and bitter lessons to bring them back to modesty and reason. Sir Arthur immediately sailed for the Tagus, and after an interview with Admiral Sir Charles Cotton, who was blockading a Russian squadron that had taken refuge in that river, decided on landing at the mouth of the Mondego, an operation which was effected on the 3d of August 1808. General Spencer had joined, and their united forces amounted to nearly 20,000 men, but were utterly deficient in cavalry, there being only a few hundred badly-mounted horsemen with the force. Sir John Moore, Sir Arthur's senior officer, was daily expected with a large reinforcement; but General Wellesley, naturally anxious to strike a good blow before another arrived to snatch

the command from him, marched rapidly along the coast towards Lisbon.

General Bernardin Freire, a Portuguese officer, at the head of about 6000 men, accompanied Wellesley for some distance; but as they neared the French, a rooted disbelief in the possibility of vanquishing Napoleon's generals grew upon him, and casting about for an excuse to avoid the approaching conflict, he hit upon the singular one of demanding that the British general should supply the Portuguese troops with rations! This absurd requisition was of course refused; indeed it was impossible to comply with it, and Don Bernardin separated himself from the English commander, leaving, however, at the request of the latter—who was anxious to retain the moral support with the country people of the presence of native troops—one regiment with the British, whom Sir Arthur undertook to supply with rations. The first resistance encountered was at Roriça, where the French general, Laborde, resolutely defended some difficult, tangled passes, retiring slowly step by step, and inflicting great loss upon the British, who could not from the nature of the ground return his incessant well-directed fire with any effect. This destruction accomplished, Laborde retreated rapidly and skilfully before the English could reach him in any sufficient force. The day after this bitter fight, the army resumed its route, and received intelligence that Junot had marched out of Lisbon—after threatening to fire it on his return if, during his absence, there should be any effort at revolt—had rallied Laborde and Loyson, and was coming on with the fixed intention of 'driving the leopards into the sea;' this being the stereotyped *Moniteur* phrase for beating and drowning the English armies. Meanwhile the 'leopards,' confident in their general and themselves, were in the highest spirits,

nothing doubting that a gazette-extraordinary would, before many days elapsed, silence the exasperating sneers of certain eloquent English politicians at the folly and rashness, as they were pleased to term it, of opposing the 'pipe-clayed soldiers of Whitehall' to the war-accustomed veterans of France. A dark cloud came between them and their hopes.

A despatch from Lord Castlereagh had informed Sir Arthur Wellesley that Sir Harry Burrard was on his way to supersede him in the command of the troops, and that shortly afterwards Sir Hew Dalrymple might be expected to supersede Sir Harry. The first instalment of the threatened calamity had arrived. General Burrard's presence on board a frigate off the coast was signalled, and Sir Arthur, as in duty bound, waited upon him, and reported the state of affairs. He related what had been already done, and announced his intention of marching to meet Junot at dawn the next morning. Sir Harry Burrard would not hear of such a proceeding, than which nothing, he said, could be more rash. 'Offer battle without cavalry, and with artillery horses, as Sir Harry Burrard understood, good for nothing! Sir Arthur must not think of such a thing: no battle must be offered till the arrival of the reinforcements under Sir John Moore.' Vainly did Sir Arthur urge his reasons for desiring immediate battle, and assure General Burrard that success was as certain as any not yet accomplished event in war could be. It was useless: the advance of the army was peremptorily forbidden; and one can easily believe that as Sir Arthur stepped into the boat that was to convey him ashore, the same bitter smile which had been observed in Earl Cathcart's council-room again played about his lips with increased intensity, and that a flushed and angry brow surmounted the flashing eyes.

Fortune made amends for the injustice of his official superior. The morning disclosed the gratifying sight of Junot's army in full march towards the English, and, without a shameful flight, battle was inevitable. Sir Arthur's dispositions were quickly made, and with perfect tranquillity and confidence he awaited Junot's approach. The French attacked with their usual valour and impetuosity, and after an obstinate conflict were driven back in utter confusion upon all points, leaving in the power of the British thirteen guns and many hundred prisoners, amongst whom was a general officer. It was now twelve o'clock; Sir Harry Burrard, who had landed a short time previously, assumed the command, and Sir Arthur's order for two divisions of the army to press fiercely upon the disordered French and drive them over the Sierra de Baraguedo, whilst Hill, Anstruther, and Fane by a rapid flank-march gained the Pass of Torres Vedras, and cut Junot off from Lisbon—which would have been equivalent, or nearly so, to the French commander's surrendering at discretion—was countermanded. Sir Arthur Wellesley expostulated warmly, it is said. General Burrard gave his reasons: Enough had been done; the English had no cavalry; the French were rallying; the artillery-traces were damaged, &c. In fine, he would hear of no pursuit; especially of no flank-march upon Lisbon, which was a thing contrary to all rule. Sir Arthur, obliged to yield, turned to one of the staff, and said: 'We had better see about getting some dinner, as there is nothing more for soldiers to do to-day.' Thus ended the battle of Vimiera.

Junot, thanks to Sir Harry Burrard, got safely back to Lisbon, and there dictated a bulletin explanatory of the reasons why he had not driven the leopards into the sea,

afterwards published in the *Moniteur* as materials for history. Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived soon afterwards, and he and Sir Harry Burrard, with General Wellesley's sullen assent—for in the present posture of affairs nothing better seemed likely to be done—concluded the famous convention, called of Cintra, why it is difficult to say, by virtue of which the French army were to evacuate Portugal, on condition of being comfortably conveyed with all their arms, horses, artillery, baggage (plunder), to the nearest French port, in British vessels! One of the conditions granted by Dalrymple was that the Russian fleet should be permitted to leave the Tagus, and be given certain *law* or distance, as sportsmen do to a fox, before the British admiral started in pursuit. This article required the consent of Sir Charles Cotton, and was at once rejected by that officer. This news arriving in the British camp caused immense exultation there, from the belief that the hated convention was consequently at an end. Sir Hew Dalrymple thought so too, and wrote in that sense to Junot; but the marshal was too well satisfied with the convention to hesitate at the sacrifice of the Russian fleet; and at once signed it, quite regardless of the omission of the stipulation in behalf of the French emperor's august ally.

Sir Arthur Wellesley got away home as quickly as he could, and resumed his duties as Irish Secretary, grimly awaiting a time when he might measure himself with those famous French marshals, unfettered and uncrippled by such well-meaning, old-world generals as Burrard and Dalrymple.

CHAPTER IV.

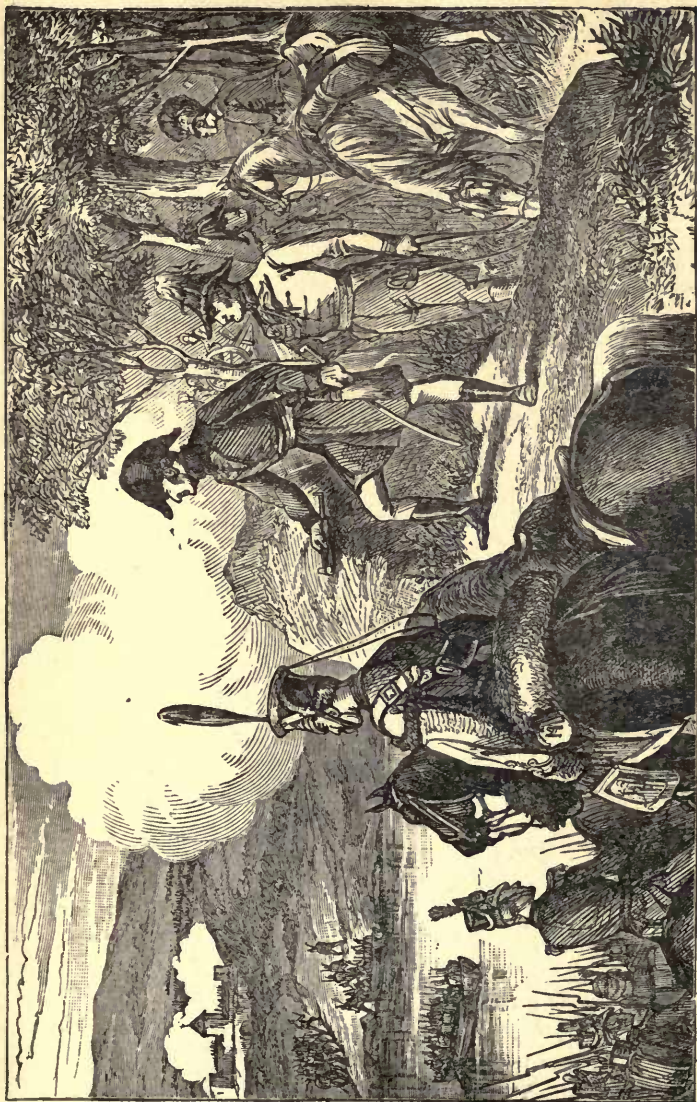
BATTLE OF TALAVERA.

THE deliverance of the Peninsula was still a prime object with the people of Great Britain, and it was determined to make another strenuous effort towards its accomplishment. Sir Arthur Wellesley, upon the distinct understanding that he should not be again superseded without reasonable cause, accepted the command of the army in Portugal; finally resigned the office of Irish Secretary; and arrived at Lisbon on the 22d of April 1809, Sir John Cradock, who had previously commanded there, returning home. Active preparations for immediate hostilities at once commenced, and were urged with such unflagging vigour by Sir Arthur that in little more than a fortnight after his arrival in Portugal he was enabled to strike the terrible blow at Soult which, reverberating throughout Europe, first roused the nations to a perception of the great fact that a general had at last entered the lists against France, who in skill, promptitude, and daring was to the full the equal of the distinguished military chieftains that had sprung from that soldier-teeming soil.

Marshal Soult had some time previously invaded Portugal from Orense in Galicia, and after dissipating the undisciplined forces opposed to him, and committing or permitting many cruel excesses, established his headquarters at Oporto, on the Douro, with about 25,000 men. Marshal Victor, with another considerable French army, was at

Almeida. It was desirable to attack them separately, and at once; and the British general, after providing against danger from Victor, marched with the step of a giant upon Oporto. Arrived on the borders of the Douro, he found Soult quietly reposing in the subjugated city, after taking the precaution of destroying the bridge and securing all the boats to his own side of a river three hundred yards wide. This done, he felt perfectly satisfied that he could not be attacked except by sea, and without receiving full notice of the intention of his enemy. He was slumbering in a fool's paradise. Sir Arthur Wellesley first despatched Beresford to seize the bridge at Amarante held by Loyson, and prevent Soult's escape by that road; then Sir John Murray, with the British cavalry, was sent off to cross the Douro some miles farther up; and at dawn of day on the 12th of May, Sir Arthur with his staff, partially concealed from the unsuspecting French outposts by a bend in the river, was eagerly searching for means of crossing to the other side. The eye of the British general rested upon a large unfinished building on the opposite shore, called a seminary. Could he find or contrive means of crossing, it would, he saw, afford a strong *point d'appui* for the passage of the troops.

At this moment Colonel Waters, a zealous and adventurous staff-officer, brought the welcome intelligence that, having met a poor barber crossing in a skiff at some distance up the river, he, aided by the influence of the prior of Amarante, had persuaded the barber not only to lend his boat, but to return with them to the other side, and assist in unfastening and bringing across three barges. This was great news. The barges were quickly reported ready, and a brief 'Let the men cross,' gave the order for this daring enterprise. The first detachment landed



Passage of the Douro.

unobserved, and took quiet possession of the unfinished seminary; the second and the third were equally fortunate; but before the fourth could cross, the quick firing of the French sentinels, soon followed by the hurried roll of Soult's drums, announced that they were discovered; and the British troops, who had hitherto been kept out of sight, crowded to the banks of the river, and greeted the French—who presently poured out of Oporto in order to attack the seminary before its defenders became too numerous—with loud shouts of exultation and defiance. The struggle at the seminary soon became furious—deadly. Paget was wounded. Hill succeeded him, but so doubtful at one time appeared the issue that Sir Arthur, but for the remonstrances of his staff, and the reflection that Hill would do all that man could to maintain the position, would himself have crossed over. Presently loud shouts were heard from the quays of the awakened city, whose inhabitants, roused from their slumbers by the din and tumult of the surprise and contest, were unchaining the boats, and rowing them with frantic eagerness across the river.

The British now crossed by hundreds, and it was not long before a cloud of dust, through which glimmered the flashing sabres of the English cavalry, announced the approach of Sir John Murray. Soult saw that the game was lost; and abandoning the city, his sick, stores, baggage, and artillery, everything with the exception of a few light field-pieces, went off rapidly in the direction of the bridge of Amarante, which he expected to find in the safe keeping of the 3000 men under Loyson. This hurried retreat must at once have changed to a headlong flight but for the unaccountable inaction of Sir John Murray, who kept his impatient squadrons immovable in their ranks whilst the

disordered stream of soldiery swept past. General Stewart, afterwards Marquis of Londonderry, impatient of this strange inactivity, charged without, or rather in defiance of orders, at the head of the 14th Dragoons alone, right through the retiring columns; but remaining unsupported by Murray, got roughly handled, and lost a considerable number of men. Soult, eagerly followed by the British army as soon as it could be got in order for that purpose, crossed the Souza River, and there, to his mortification and dismay, met Loyson's force, which had hastily retired from before Beresford. The French marshal's position now appeared desperate, and Loyson suggested the idea of a convention like that of Cintra. Soult, hopeless in all probability of cheating out of the fruits of his calculated daring the general who had struck him the blow he was writhing under, rejected the proposal; and having found a Spanish pedler, who informed him there was a road which led over the Sierra Catarina to Guimaraens, the marshal abandoned Loyson's and his own remaining cannon, baggage, military chest, and boldly followed his Spanish guide across the mountains. Everything was thrown away that could in the slightest degree impede this terrible retreat—terrible not only to the French, whose stragglers were mercilessly slain by the peasantry, roused into ferocious activity by the unlooked-for sight of the discomfiture and rout of the so lately recklessly triumphant troops—

The desolator desolate, the victor overthrown—

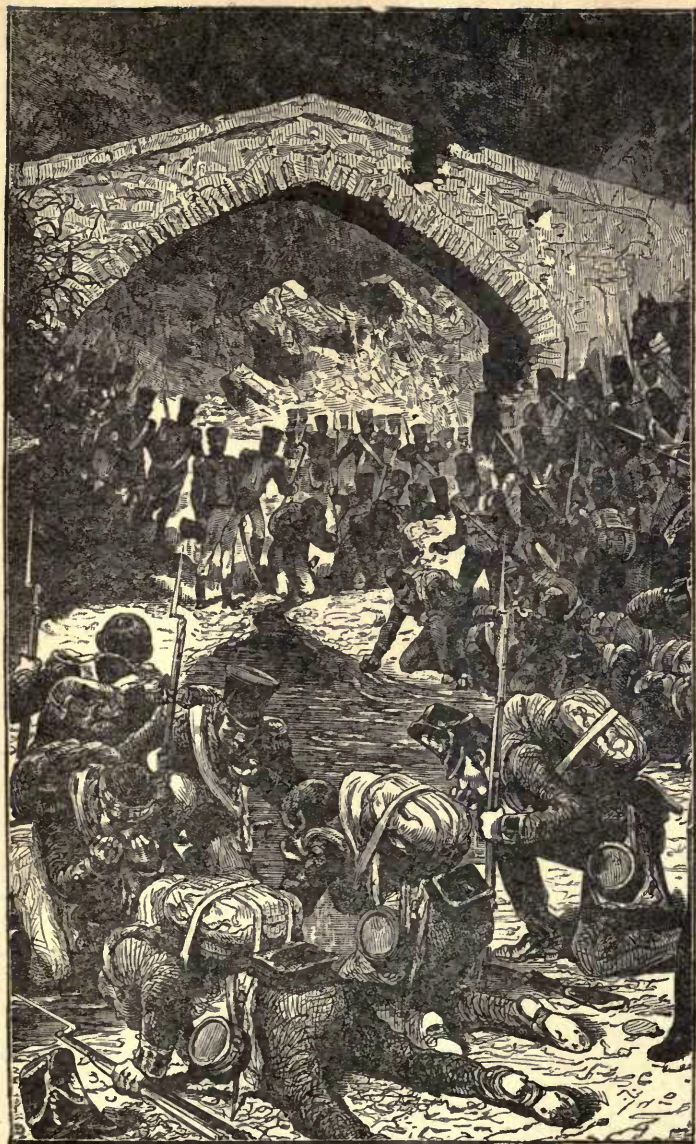
but to the wretched country people in the line of march, whom the French, in retaliation for the cruelties inflicted in their sight upon the maimed and footsore of their own people, shot without scruple or remorse, at the same time firing their dwellings, thus marking every step of their

flight with blood and flame and ruin. It was doubtful, too, if after all they would escape, for at every pause for scanty rest the tramp and gallop of the British army sounded more and more distinctly in their rear, and tidings reached Soult that the only bridge by which escape was possible—that of Ponte Nova, on the Cavado—was partly cut, and in possession of a Portuguese guard. Sending for Major Dulong, an officer of distinguished bravery, the marshal, after briefly explaining the situation, said: ‘Take a hundred grenadiers and twenty-five horsemen, and endeavour to surprise and repair the bridge. If you are successful, let me know immediately; if you fail, you need send no message—your silence will be enough.’ Dulong, favoured by the storm and darkness of the night, succeeded in his perilous and well-nigh desperate enterprise. Only a narrow ledge of the bridge remained passable, and over this he and his grenadiers crawled in single file upon their hands and feet. One soldier lost his hold and fell into the Cavado; his cry of agony, fortunately for his comrades, being drowned in the roar and splash of the howling storm and rushing waters.

The Portuguese sentinel was surprised and slain, and the heedless guard were overpowered and dispersed. The bridge was hastily repaired, and the French army was enabled to pass slowly over, a portion of the British artillery only arriving in time to strew the passage and defile the river with numerous dead and wounded men of the rearguard. Soult ultimately reached Orense in Galicia, and there the British cavalry desisted from farther pursuit. The French marshal had left that town eleven weeks previously with 25,000 veteran troops, fifty-eight pieces of artillery, numerous stores, and valuable baggage. He returned to it with 19,000 men, destitute of everything but the arms in their

hands and the ragged clothing on their backs. With such passages in this terrific war as this frightful retreat or rather flight presents, and with the dreadful misery and ruin inflicted and suffered fresh in the memory—the war, it is impossible to deny, originating in the insatiable ambition of the French emperor—the recollection of the sentimental cry set up against the cruelty of Napoleon's imprisonment at St Helena strikes the mind with a feeling of astonishment at the infinitely varied and discordant scale by which human actions are sometimes judged in this strange world of ours.

Marshal Victor, on hearing of the disaster which had befallen Soult, united himself with Jourdan and King Joseph, and, conjointly with them, on the 28th and 29th of July, fought the battle of Talavera de la Reyna against General Wellesley's army and the Spanish force under Cuesta. This battle would never have been hazarded by the British general had he not been misled into an almost inextricable position by the imbecility and braggadocia of Cuesta. The Spanish soldiers, individually as brave perhaps as others, were so wretchedly organised, so inefficiently commanded, that they, on the day of trial, proved almost useless. The position of the British army when it was ascertained that Cuesta's army could not be relied upon was manifestly one of extreme peril. Joseph, Victor, and Jourdan were in front with an army immensely superior to that commanded by General Wellesley; and Soult, with veteran readiness had already reorganised and re-equipped his so lately beaten force, which had moreover been powerfully reinforced, and was in full march upon Sir Arthur's communications with Portugal, with the intention of falling upon the British rear. Soult sent messenger after messenger to King Joseph, begging him not to fight



English and French Soldiers at the Stream.

till he (Soult) could get up. Fortunately Victor's presumption and Joseph's pliancy prevented this wary counsel from being adopted. Talavera was fought: the French, after a tremendous contest, were driven beyond the Alberche with the loss of ten guns. In the course of the battle an interesting incident occurred. By common consent, and without orders from the leaders, the firing ceased, and both English and French rushed to the banks of a small brook which separated the two armies. Here the foemen, rendered friendly for the moment, under the masterful influence of a natural desire, quenched their thirst, without suspicion of perfidy on either side, and without a single shot being fired. After the battle Sir Arthur Wellesley, whom victory alone could enable to retreat, withdrew his army, by this time reduced to 17,000 men, by the line of the Tagus into Portugal. The Spanish troops, now become a mere armed mob, followed, hotly pursued by Marshal Victor, who captured the British hospitals, unavoidably left for a brief space under Cuesta's charge.

General Craufurd's brigade was sixty-two miles distant from Talavera when he first heard of the imminence of the unequal fight. He instantly put his troops in motion, marched without rest towards the scene of action, his own and his soldiers' impatience but stimulated by meeting scores of runaways from the first day's fight—not all of them Spaniards, nor private soldiers—who asserted that the British were beaten and in full retreat. Craufurd crossed the field of battle on the evening of the victory, having brought his men in heavy marching-order sixty-two miles in twenty-six hours, and this, too, in the July of a Spanish summer. That ground had been traversed a short time before his arrival by a far deadlier enemy than the

French. The tall dry grass had by some accident caught fire, and hundreds of wounded soldiers thickly scattered over the field of death perished miserably in the flames. For this battle, and the passage of the Douro, the British general was on the 26th of the following August created a peer of England by the title of Baron Douro and Viscount Wellington. He also received the thanks of parliament for Talavera, a battle in which he had unquestionably displayed consummate mastery in the art of handling troops in the face of an enemy, and abundant resources in moments of perilous emergency. On the 10th of February 1810, the Commons voted Lord Wellington a pension of £2000 a year, with succession for two generations.

Determined never again to trust to the co-operation of Spanish generals or armies, Lord Wellington now anxiously directed his attention to the best mode of effectually defending Portugal by the British army, aided by the Portuguese regiments which were being disciplined, organised, and officered under the direction of General Beresford, created for that purpose a marshal in the Portuguese service. His meditations resulted in the conception of the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras, which were at once commenced, but without the slightest ostentation or hint of the purpose to which they were destined.

In the spring of 1810 Marshal Masséna, 'the spoiled child of victory,' as he was designated by Napoleon, was appointed to the as yet baffled task of driving, with Ney's assistance, the English leopards into the sea; but the renowned commander quickly found that Dame Fortune has frowns as well as favours for the most indulged of her children. Masséna crowed loudly, assuring the French emperor that he was certain of success, and the aspect of affairs appeared to justify his vaunting arrogance. The


French army destined to operate against Wellington had been increased to 90,000 men, chiefly veteran soldiers, to whom the English general could not oppose more than 40,000 British troops, the remainder of his army being composed of the as yet untried Portuguese regiments. The thousands of gallant men sent to perish in the pestilential marshes of the Low Countries might indeed have more than restored the balance; but they died uselessly, victims of the presumptuous ignorance of such men as Perceval and Canning, who, unwarned by failure, *would* persist in directing the military operations of Great Britain. Masséna opened the campaign with great spirit, and advanced with elate step towards Lord Wellington, who, having concentrated his force, slowly retired, to give time to the Portuguese people to withdraw, as he commanded, with all the provisions and property they could take with them to Lisbon, after destroying and laying waste that which could *not* be carried off.

These orders were in general cheerfully obeyed. His plan of defence, as yet not guessed at by the French marshal, worked efficiently; and in order to give a hopeful tone to the mind of a nation whom imperious necessity compelled to submit to such terrible sacrifices, as well as to check the exulting tide of French impetuosity, he halted and offered battle at Busaco. He was unhesitatingly attacked, Ney leading one of the divisions—all of which were defeated, and hurled back with heavy loss and discomfiture. Not the slightest impression could be made by 'the spoiled child of victory;' and after waiting in position a sufficient time to enable Masséna to renew the attack, if he had so willed, Wellington, in pursuance of his settled purpose, leisurely withdrew to the lines of Torres Vedras, which he reached and occupied on the 10th

of October. The French marshal, with confidence restored by this retrograde movement, eagerly followed through a wasted country an enemy whom he fondly imagined was retreating to the shelter of his ships. On the 12th Masséna arrived in front of the lines and looked at them. He did no more, remaining in a state of stupor and inaction till the 16th of November, when no food of any kind, not even pulse or horse-flesh, being any longer attainable, his suffering, demoralised army retreated, pursued by Wellington, who had been reinforced seaward, and the enemy were ultimately driven out of Portugal.

CHAPTER V.

SERVICE IN SPAIN.

N 1811 Lord Wellington received the thanks of the British crown and parliament for the liberation of Portugal. We have no space to recount the incidents of the battles of Fuentes de Oñoro on the 3d and 5th of May, wherein victory, as was her wont, rested with the British general; nor those of the terrific fight at Albuera, in which the desperate bravery and hardihood of the Rifle Brigade, under the direction of Captain, afterwards Lord Hardinge, retrieved a battle perilled by the hesitation or incapacity of Marshal Beresford; and the dashing enterprise of General Hill at Arroyo de Molinos—where that gallant officer surprised Girard, dispersed his force, captured all his cannon, and 1700 cavalry of the Imperial Guard—must be passed over. ‘The spoiled child of victory’ had been recalled, and his place filled by Marshal Marmont, who was ordered to finish with the British general at any

sacrifice ; and that he might do so, the army placed under his orders was powerfully reinforced by numerous battalions of the Imperial Guard.

Marmont very speedily concentrated between 60,000 and 70,000 admirable soldiers, who, confident of victory, marched exultingly to battle. The first rencontre of Marmont's troops with the British was in a slight affair, as far as numbers were concerned, at El-Bodon, and remarkable only for the proof it afforded of the impossibility of overthrowing a valiant, well-disciplined infantry, by charges of cavalry, however brave, numerous, and determined may be the horsemen.

When this combat occurred, the British general, now Earl of Wellington, was making a retrograde movement for the purpose of uniting his somewhat widely-sundered army. He himself took post at Guinaldo ; Craufurd, who with the light division was about sixteen miles distant, was ordered to join him there immediately ; the left of the army under Graham was ten miles off ; and the 5th division was at Parfo, in the mountains, twelve miles distant. In this situation of the army, Craufurd's disobedience or neglect of orders, but for the iron nerve of the British general, would have lost the light division. Instead of marching without pause upon Guinaldo, he halted for the day, after accomplishing about four miles only. This gave time for the concentration of Marmont's imposing force, consisting, as we have before stated, of nearly 70,000 excellent soldiers, in front of the position occupied by the Earl of Wellington at Guinaldo, with not more than 14,000 men ! To leave the post without waiting for the light division was to abandon the latter to certain destruction or capture ; and during that evening and night, and the next day till three o'clock in the afternoon, when the light

division was out of danger, the British general held the position at Guinaldo so confidently that Marmont firmly believed himself to be in front of Wellington's entire army ; and whilst meditating the best mode of attack, displayed his splendid troops by a grand parade in the plains below. The apparent coolness of Wellington, upon whose impassive countenance, as he looked upon the brilliant show beneath, only a grim smile was seen occasionally to pass, excited the wonder of his staff, all of whom were of course aware of the extreme peril of the situation. At last an officer galloped up to announce the safe arrival of the light division, when a long-drawn, heavy breath, and a broken exclamation of joy, which escaped the British general, showed how keen had been the anxiety concealed beneath the marble exterior. The troops were instantly withdrawn, and an able concentric movement united the army on the following day.

The astonishment of Marmont on becoming aware of what had occurred was extreme, and his preoccupation for several hours afterwards was remarked by all who approached him. During a conversation with the officers of his staff, one of them happened to speak of Napoleon's brilliant star. 'And this Wellington,' said Marmont, looking suddenly up and speaking with vivacity, 'his star is brilliant too.' The remark was a prophetic one, as the French marshal before many days had passed learned to his cost.

We now come to the astonishing winter-campaign of 1812, but even that we may but briefly dwell upon. And here a statement must be made that will greatly surprise those readers who remember what enormous subsidies were squandered during the war by successive English ministries upon inefficient foreign armies. Lord Wellington, whose

victories were the sole aliment of hope to the struggling peoples of the Continent, was, spite of the most urgent, almost pathetic entreaties, kept nearly penniless for weeks and months together. At the close of the year 1811, he was involved in enormous debt, contracted for the supply of his troops; and after all he could raise by way of credit, the pay of the army was more than three months in arrear, and that of the muleteers eight months! Half and quarter rations were frequently served out, and more than once the soldiers were without bread for three days together.

Lord Wellington was extremely anxious to strike a great blow, if it could be done with any chance of success, not only to gratify the British people—who little imagined how miserably, since the Marquis of Wellesley had ceased to influence the British councils, their gallant army and favourite general were starved and stinted—but to fan the rising flame of resistance, once more beginning to show itself in the east and north of Europe. In order to do this, it was necessary to make even his needs subservient to his audacious purpose. There were two French armies at no great distance—one under Marmont; the other commanded by Soult in Andalusia. These armies remained separate, from the clear impossibility of both finding subsistence in one locality. The French marshals were informed by their numerous spies of the destitution in many important respects of their great antagonist, and he determined they should continue to believe him to be in every way helplessly crippled. His object was to storm the two strong and important Spanish fortresses, both garrisoned by choice French troops, of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and so conceal and time his enterprise that neither Soult nor Marmont should be able to afford either of the garrisons any effectual relief or assistance. To effect

this the closest secrecy as to his purpose was of course absolutely necessary.

Hitherto his intentions, if entrusted to subordinate officers, or communicated to ministers, always by some means or other found their way into the English newspapers, translations of which were made in Paris and transmitted to the French commanders. He determined this time to put the ubiquitous journals on a wrong scent, and succeeded admirably. General Quartermaster Murray, requesting leave of absence, was granted it immediately, 'as nothing could be done till the spring.' This was repeated by General Murray on his arrival in England, and extracts from the London newspapers in due time certified the fact to the anxious French marshals. Even the chief engineers of the army only guessed that a siege or the semblance of a siege was contemplated. He hit upon a still more effectual mode of deceiving the French generals. A splendid iron battering-train had arrived at Lisbon from England. Wellington had it reshipped with some ostentation for Cadiz, causing it to be met at sea by vessels of light draught, into which the cannon were shifted, and conveyed first to Oporto and then in boats to Lamego, whilst the ships went on to Cadiz.

At length, his preparations thoroughly complete, and his project unguessed even by his own soldiers, he suddenly put the army in motion, reached, battered, and stormed Ciudad Rodrigo. Its fall on the 19th of January 1812 came like a thunderbolt upon the French marshals, who did not at first credit the intelligence. There was, however, no help for it; and as their spies informed them that Wellington was returning to his old quarters, after a little idle bustle they gradually settled into quietude again. The thunder of the English cannon, directed

against the crumbling walls of Badajoz, awoke them a second time from their dream of security; but before any effectual combination could be concerted, that fortress too had fallen. It was stormed on the night of the 6th of April, at a sacrifice of life so frightful as to overcome for a moment the iron sternness of the British general, who, at the sight of the thousands of his gallant veterans that had fallen before an entrance could be won, burst into tears. Philippon, the commandant of Badajoz, preserved Soult from a worse disaster than had yet befallen him, by conveying to him timely intelligence of the fall of that fortress. The Duke of Dalmatia was marching to Philippon's assistance when the messenger reached him, and he had just time to retrace his steps, and escape the signal overthrow that General Hill, who had been lying in wait for his advance, would unquestionably have inflicted upon him, seconded as he would now have been by the whole of the disengaged army.

In the beginning of July the opposing armies once more gradually approached each other near Salamanca. A contest of manœuvres took place on the Tormes, in which neither side for some time gained any advantage. At length Lord Wellington, becoming utterly destitute of the means of keeping the field, reluctantly determined on retiring by the road to Ciudad Rodrigo, and dispositions with that view were made. His inability to prosecute the campaign arose entirely from the supineness of the English ministry, who had failed to afford him the necessary supplies. 'I have never,' he wrote at the time, 'been in such distress as at present, and some serious misfortune must happen if the government does not attend to the subject, and supply us regularly with money.' Marmont divined the intention of the British commander, and on

the 22d of July hazarded a move which, had a less skilful player been opposed to him, might have been successful, but attempted against Wellington it turned out to be a disastrous blunder, ruinous alike to the French army and the marshal's own reputation. He despatched Thomière's *corps d'armée* with fifty guns by a circuitous route to turn the left of the British army, and thus prevent its retreat by Ciudad Rodrigo. Owing to the nature of the ground, this movement was not observed by the English officers till about two hours after it had commenced. It was of course immediately communicated to Lord Wellington, who saw at a glance its full significance. He sprang to his feet so eagerly that he overturned the table at which he had been sitting, and exclaimed with irrepressible exultation: 'If that be so, Marmont's good-fortune has for once deserted him.'

It was quite true. Thomière's *corps d'armée*, extending two or three miles in length, was hopelessly sundered from the main body of Marmont's troops. The blunder was an enormous one, and the British general quickly rendered it irreparable. Staff-officers went off at a gallop in every direction; the infantry stood to their arms; the cavalry vaulted to their saddles; the artillery unlimbered; and Marmont's weakened army was instantly attacked in overwhelming force. The French marshal saw his error, and officer after officer was despatched to command the return of Thomière. They never reached him. As the head of Thomière's leading column emerged upon the Ciudad Rodrigo road, where they expected to find the British in full retreat, Pakenham fell like a thunderbolt upon his rear, and rolled up the long, straggling line with hideous slaughter, to which no effectual resistance could be opposed. Marmont's heart died within him at the

sight. Brave as steel, however, as most French soldiers are, he struggled desperately to maintain the combat, but the explosion of a shell grievously wounding him, he was carried out of the battle. Clausel succeeded to the command, but the fortune of the day could not be changed.


The French army was utterly defeated, and driven off the field, with the loss of its artillery, several thousand prisoners, and a vast number of slain and wounded men. General Foy, who exerted himself zealously to protect the retreat, writing of Salamanca, said: 'It was a battle in which forty thousand men were beaten in forty minutes.' The news of Marmont's signal defeat reached the French emperor just as he had crossed the Borodino, and must have fallen as a dread and evil omen upon that superstitious votary and child of destiny. Salamanca was by far the completest victory yet gained by the British general over the French armies, and was always that upon which he chiefly prided himself. 'I saw him,' remarks the historian, General Napier—'I saw him late in the evening of that great day, when the advancing flashes of cannon and musketry showed how well the field was won: he was alone. The flush of victory was upon his brow, and his eyes were eager and watchful, but his voice was calm and even gentle. With a prescient pride he seemed to accept this glory as an earnest of greater things to come.' The valour and enthusiasm displayed by all ranks of the victorious army on this occasion historians speak of as remarkable; and one of the weaker and better sex exhibited a heroic disregard of danger that would not have shamed the bravest soldier there. 'The wife of Colonel Dalbiac,' says the author we have just quoted, 'a delicate and timid English lady, rode deep into the fire, actuated by a fear stronger than that of death.'

On the 12th of August following, Wellington made his triumphant entry into Madrid amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, and was immediately afterwards appointed generalissimo of the Spanish armies. On the 18th of the same month he was created Marquis of Wellington by the Prince-Regent of England.

The next great incidents of the war were the unsuccessful attack upon the fortress of Burgos, numerouslly garrisoned by French troops commanded by Marshal Clausel, the consequent retreat upon Portugal, and the evacuation of Madrid.

CHAPTER VI.

WATERLOO—CLOSING YEARS.

N the beginning of 1813, the Marquis of Wellington, upon whom the colonelcy of the Royal Regiment of Horse-guards had been previously conferred, was created a Knight of the Garter. He visited Cadiz, and sailed thence to Lisbon, where he was received by the population with great enthusiasm. Hope of permanent deliverance had revived in the hearts of the people. The news of the disastrous issue of Napoleon's Russian campaign had been published, and everywhere a determination to press the French armies vigorously was manifested. The Marquis of Wellington's army advanced rapidly through Spain, King Joseph and his marshals retiring to concentrate their forces near Vittoria, where, on the 21st June 1813, they accepted battle, and the total irremediable rout of the French army was the result. That army lost their cannon, stores, a vast number of killed, wounded, and prisoners,

and the intrusive monarch his carriages, treasure, and baggage, glad doubtless to escape with life from his imaginary kingdom. Marshal Jourdan, in the hurry of his flight, left his truncheon behind him a trophy for the victors, which on 3d of July the *Gazette* announced had been conferred by the Prince-Regent upon Field-Marshal the Marquis of Wellington. Honours and rewards were thickly showered about this time upon the triumphant British general. One hundred thousand pounds for the purchase of an estate had been voted him by the English parliament, and he was now created by the Spanish authorities Duque de Ciudad Rodrigo, and a grandee of Spain of the first class. The estate of Soto de Roma, of which the unhappily celebrated Prince of Peace had been despoiled, was bestowed upon him by the Cadiz Cortes, 'in testimony of the gratitude of the Spanish nation.' He accepted the gift, but the proceeds of the estate were devoted during the war to the public service.

These honours, gifts, and compliments were, so far as the Cortes and ruling powers of Spain were concerned, mere veils to hide from the world their envy and dislike both of the English nation and their general. All fear of the French having passed away, the instinctive Spanish aversion to foreigners seized anew upon the soldiers and people, to whom, it galled their pride to be compelled to confess, they were mainly indebted for the recovery of their national independence. They did not want plausible excuses either for their enmity towards the British army. The horrors enacted at St Sebastian by some of the furious soldiers—who, during five hours of dreadful battle at the breach, had seen nearly 3000 men struck down around them by the fierce destruction vomited forth from the

at last captured town—were published with many exaggerations by the municipality of the ill-fated city, and created naturally a strong sensation throughout Spain. The town, it was well known, had been fired by the French garrison as they retired through it to the citadel; but the fact was purposely concealed, and every horror of the fearful time—flame, robbery, murder—was attributed, not alone to the infuriated ruffians who had perpetrated the outrages, but to the entire soldiery: a gross injustice; the mass of the troops, as well as the officers who risked their lives, and in two instances lost them, to calm the dreadful tumult, being as indignant at the excesses committed as the Spaniards themselves could be. Two-thirds of the officers of the storming force were unfortunately killed or hurt, and it was for some hours impossible to maintain or restore discipline.

Lord Wellington was not present on the day of the successful assault, although he had intended to be so, when, angered by the former failure of the 5th division, he issued his requisition, demanding fifteen volunteers from each of the regiments composing the 1st, 4th, and light divisions—‘men who could show other troops how to mount a breach’—an appeal answered by 750 gallant men, who nearly all perished. Sir Thomas Graham (Lord Lynedoch) commanded, but the day after the assault Wellington arrived: some severe examples were made, and order was restored with a rigorous, unsparing hand. These calumnies on the army appear to have irritated the British general much more than the numerous libels directed personally against himself. Amongst other things he was accused of plotting to get himself made king of Spain by the nobles, and some of the grandees thought it worth while to publish a solemn contradiction of the

rumour. The quarrel became at last so envenomed, that when about to enter France he fully expected a civil war to break out upon his communications, and wrote home that if he were the government the army should not remain in the country another hour. Happily these disputes were checked before they could break out into open violence: the mass of the population, the soldiers, and regimental officers had no confidence but in his leadership; the turbulent spirits of the Cortes were overawed, and decorum, if not content, was re-established.

The French emperor sent Soult from Germany, with full powers as his lieutenant, to take the command of all the French troops in Spain, in order if possible to arrest the conquering march of Wellington upon France. This task Soult gallantly, if vainly, attempted. But the hour of defeat had struck. Step by step all intervening obstacles, whether of man or nature, were pushed aside or overleaped, and in November 1813 the standards that three years before had floated over the last dike at Torres Vedras, which withstood the irruptive torrent of the imperial armies, now waved in retributive triumph over the vainly-imagined 'sacred soil' from whence the armed invasion had come forth. We need not further dwell upon the incidents of a struggle, terminated by the bitter fight before Toulouse, that during six years had desolated the Peninsula. Enough has been written to show how terrible was the strife, and how great and constant were the skill and courage ultimately crowned with victory.

The peace of 1814 terminated the war, it was hoped permanently, and the British troops returned home. Their renowned commander was created, on the 3d of May of that year, Marquis of Douro and Duke of Wellington; and in June £400,000, making, with the previous grant

of £100,000, half a million of money, was awarded him by the House of Commons. On the 28th of the same month the Duke took his seat in the House of Peers, and subscribed the parliamentary roll, the patents of all his titles having been first read by the officer of the House.

The Duke of Wellington was at the Congress of Kings in Vienna when the news of Bonaparte's return from Elba startled the world from its transient dream of peace, and speedily afterwards we find him in Belgium, to use his own expression, at the head—with the exception of his old soldiers who had fought in Spain—'of the most infamous army in the world.' The British troops with the Duke, it must be remembered, did not exceed 35,000 men, the rest of the army, with some brilliant exceptions, being composed of troops better fitted for a parade than a stubborn battle. Had the 69,000 men led by Wellington been all men who had gone through the fiery ordeal of the Peninsular campaigns, it is no disparagement to the unquestionable bravery of the French army of 72,000 men, to say that the struggle would have been nothing like so long and obstinate as it proved.

There had been steady marching and fighting on the part of the French for eleven hours, within forty miles of Brussels, before the fact was known to the Duke, at three P.M. on the 15th June 1815. He gave orders that the reserve should march from Brussels by Waterloo and Genappe. At midnight the Duke called on Muffling and told him what he had done. He said, 'The numerous friends of Napoleon here will be on tiptoe, the well-intentioned must be pacified; let us therefore go to the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and start for Quatre Bras at five A.M.' He accordingly set out for the front in the morning, and reached Quatre Bras about eleven. The sound of Napoleon's

advance was here plainly audible. On the 17th Wellington heard that Blücher was at Wavre, and sent word to him that he would himself stand fast at Mont St Jean, near Waterloo, if Blücher would support him with two corps. Blücher's memorable reply was that he would come with his whole army. This was the famous combination which led to the battle of Waterloo.



Wellington at Waterloo.

The decisive conflict which annihilated the power of Napoleon I., was fought, 18th June 1815, in a plain about two miles from the village of Waterloo, and twelve miles south from Brussels.

On the morning of the 18th, the two armies found themselves ranged in battle-array opposite each other. The Allies, posted on a line of eminences, had their left wing

resting on Frischermont, the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte in front of their centre, while their right wing curved convexly round behind Hougomont, and rested on Merbe Braine. The French were ranged on a parallel row of eminences, having La Belle Alliance in their centre, with some divisions of cavalry and infantry in reserve behind the right wing; Kellermann's dragoons behind the left wing; and the Guard, stationed with the 6th corps, in the rear. Skirmishing had continued all the morning; but the first serious attack was not made till between eleven and twelve, when a part of the 1st corps advanced against Hougomont, with the view of masking the more important attack to be made against the allied left. This preliminary assault, however, though unsuccessful, was maintained with great vigour for a considerable time; till Napoleon, dreading a further loss of time, prepared to make his grand attack on the left centre. At this time (half-past one P.M.), he learned that the advanced guard of the 4th Prussian corps (Bülow's) was appearing in front of St Lambert, to his right; and being forced to detach his 6th corps (Lobau's) with the reserves of cavalry behind his right wing, to keep them in check, he had to modify his grand plan of attack on the Anglo-Netherlanders, and accordingly ordered Ney to break through their centre. At two P.M., after a furious preliminary cannonade, from which Wellington sheltered his men (as at various other times during the battle), by retiring them to the reverse of the slope, Ney advanced against the left centre with 20,000 men, but had only succeeded in putting to flight a Belgian brigade, when he was attacked and driven back by Picton's division, his retreating columns charged and broken by the English cavalry, and 3000 prisoners taken. Nevertheless, after a brief space, Ney returned to the charge, and carried La



NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

Haye Sainte, though his repeated attacks on the infantry in position were constantly repulsed, and his retreating columns severely handled by the British cavalry, who, disordered by success, were as often overthrown by the French cuirassiers.

By this time (half-past four P.M.), Bülow had succeeded in deploying from the woods, and, advancing against Planchenois, in the rear of the French right, carried it after a vigorous conflict. Lobau's corps, however, aided by a reinforcement from the Guard, speedily retook the post, and driving the Prussians back into the wood, secured the French right flank for a time; Napoleon, though now learning that another Prussian corps (the 1st, under Ziethen) was coming up by Ohain to join the Allied left, being still confident that he could destroy the Anglo-Netherlanders before the Prussians could render effective aid. During the conflict with Bülow, Ney had been warmly engaged with the centre and right of the enemy, who had made various attempts to regain the wood of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, and had supported his repeated attacks with not only his own cavalry, but (by, at anyrate, the 'tacit consent' of the emperor) with the cuirassiers, lancers, and chasseurs of the Guard, and the whole of the mounted reserve, without, however, producing any result other than a great slaughter on both sides, and the useless sacrifice of 18,000 of the finest cavalry ever seen.

Napoleon now resolved on another vehement assault on the immovable British centre, and directed against it in succession two columns, one composed of four battalions of the Middle Guard, and the other of four battalions of the Middle and two of the Old Guard, supporting them with flank attacks of other infantry divisions, of cavalry, and with a dreadful fire of artillery. The advancing French

were met with a well-sustained fire from every piece which could be brought to bear upon them ; the first attacking column was fairly driven down the slope by the English Guards, and the second was totally routed by a bayonet-charge of Adam's brigade, the British cavalry following up the fugitives. Ziethen had now (seven P.M.) joined the left of the English line ; Bülow, further reinforced, had carried Planchenois, and was driving the French right wing before him ; and the combined attack on the retiring masses of the French by the whole effective force of the Anglo-Netherlanders on the one side, and of the Prussian cavalry on the other, converted an ordinary, though severe, defeat into a rout unparalleled in history.

The magnificent cavalry, wantonly destroyed by Ney in fruitless attacks upon an 'impracticable' infantry, would then have been of incalculable service, but they were no longer to be had. The last square of the Guard still stood its ground, to protect the flight of the emperor ; but it was speedily surrounded, and on the soldier-like refusal of Cambronne to surrender, was in a moment pierced through, and broken to pieces. From this time all resistance was over ; the roads southwards, especially that to Genappe, were crowded with fugitives fleeing for their lives from the pursuing cavalry ; and though the English light cavalry, exhausted with their severe work during the battle, soon ceased the pursuit, it was kept up with great energy throughout the whole night by the Prussian troopers, who seemed bent upon at once avenging the defeats of Jena, Auerstädt, and Ligny, and glutted their fierce animosity by an indiscriminate slaughter.

Wellington has been accused as cold and unfeeling. He was stern in discipline, but he had heart too. Dr Hume relates that he found him in bed early on the

morning after Waterloo : 'He had as usual taken off his clothes, but had not washed himself. As I entered he sat up in bed, his face covered with the dust and sweat of the previous day, and extended his hand to me, which I took and held in mine, whilst I told him of Gordon's death, and of such of the casualties as had come to my knowledge. He was much affected. I felt the tears dropping fast upon my hand, and, looking towards him, saw them chasing one another in furrows over his dusty cheeks.'

The capitulation of Paris, agreed to between Marshal Davoust, Prince of Eckmühl—acting on behalf of the provisional government, at the head of which was Fouché, Duc d'Otrante—and Wellington and Blücher, was signed on the 3d of July 1815, and the French army occupying Paris retired beyond the Loire.

The English field-marshal was appointed, by the unanimous consent and approbation of the powers, to command the Allied Army of Observation, a delicate and onerous duty, which he discharged in the most satisfactory and efficient manner; and on the final evacuation of France on the 1st of November 1818, he returned to England, and soon afterwards entered Lord Liverpool's cabinet as Master-General of the Ordnance. An extra grant of £200,000 was voted him in 1815, making in all £700,000 in money, besides the pension of £2000 a year, and many lucrative appointments bestowed upon him by the government—an amount of pecuniary reward as unexampled as the military services it recompensed.

The remainder of his Grace's career belongs to the civil history of the country. After Sir Robert Peel's death, the Duke seldom spoke in parliament. One of the last speeches he delivered in the House of Peers was spoken in

a voice broken with emotion. Yet he seemed to stand more erect than he had lately done, and his eyes kindled somewhat with their old fire as, looking round with a sort of defiance upon the assembly—many of whom he knew were in the bitterness of their political opposition almost personal enemies of his deceased friend—he pronounced the emphatic eulogium upon Sir Robert Peel, that he, above all men he ever knew, was governed in every action of his life by a love of truth and justice.

Thomas Carlyle thus sketches the appearance of the Duke in his old age: ‘Truly a beautiful old man—I had never seen till now how beautiful; and what an expression of graceful simplicity, veracity, and nobleness there is about the old hero when you see him close at hand! His very size had hitherto deceived me. He is a shortish, slightish figure, about five feet eight, of good breadth, however, and all muscle or bone. His legs, I think, must be the short part of him, for certainly on horseback I have always taken him to be tall. Eyes, beautiful light blue, full of mild valour, with infinitely more faculty and geniality than I had fancied before; the face wholly gentle, wise, valiant, and venerable. The voice, too, as I again heard, is “aquiline,” clear, perfectly equable—uncracked, that is, and perhaps almost musical, but essentially tenor or almost treble voice. Eighty-two, I understand. He glided slowly along, slightly saluting this and that other; clear, clean, fresh as this June evening itself, till the silver buckle of his stock vanished into the door of the next room, and I saw him no more.’

Queen Victoria once said of him that ‘he was the pride and the genius, as it were, of the country.’ He was extremely generous in private life, and carried loose sovereigns in his pocket to bestow on any of his old

soldiers in distress. One year his private charities reached £4000.

The temperate, regular habits of the Duke enabled him to reach an age granted to few men so much engrossed in public affairs; and even in his eighty-third year, he continued to participate in many of the gaieties of life. Somewhat bent in body, but with intellect clear and decisive as ever, he performed the arduous duties of his situation as commander-in-chief, to the satisfaction of the whole community. Death came in abruptly at last. On the morning of the 14th of September 1852, he awoke in his usual health, but almost immediately after complained of slight indisposition. He soon fell into a succession of fits, which ended in death at three in the afternoon. He was buried under the dome of St Paul's, and a monument to his memory stands in the chapel at the south-west end of the cathedral.

The qualities, mental and moral, of the illustrious field-marshal are written in such firm and vivid characters in his life, that none but the wilfully blind can fail to perceive their significance and appreciate their value. That he was a magnificent leader of armies, a general marvellously skilled in the art of handling troops in the field, and strong to encounter and overcome adverse fortune by indomitable courage and unswerving constancy, is as undeniably true as that he was in no sense a great statesman. There was no breadth, no largeness in his notions and maxims of civil polity: he appeared to have no faith in the progress of humanity, no feeling of the strength and majesty of moral power. It may serve to illustrate the routine habit of his mind, when employed on other than strictly professional questions, that he lays it down repeatedly over and over again in his voluminous

correspondence, that the alliance of Portugal is before all others important to the interests and welfare of this country. But, with all this, the record of his life is a great epitaph. The name of Arthur, Duke of Wellington, will, whenever uttered in ages yet to come, recall the memory of a great soldier, and an earnest-minded though not eminent statesman.

His work is done ;
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure.

TENNYSON.

THE END.

W 82280

DA
87
.1
N4S7

The story of Nelson and
Wellington

**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET**

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARY**

